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XXXIX

THE POETICAL WORKS OF HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

VOL. I

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OF

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES

VOL. I

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THE POETICAL WORKS OF

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

EARLY POEMS

[WRITTEN FOR THE MOST PART DURING MY COLLEGE LIFE, AND ALL OF THEM BEFORE THE AGE OF NINETEEN.]

AN APRIL DAY

When the warm sun, that brings
Seed-time and harvest, has returned again,
'Tis sweet to visit the still wood, where springs
The first flower of the plain.

I love the season well,
When forest glades are teeming with bright forms,
Nor dark and many-folded clouds foretell
The coming-on of storms.

From the earth's loosened mould
The sapling draws its sustenance, and thrives;
Though stricken to the heart with Winter's cold,
The drooping tree revives.

The softly-warbled song
Comes from the pleasant woods, and coloured wings
Glance quick in the bright sun, that moves along
The forest openings.

When the bright sunset fills
The silver woods with light, the green slope throws
Its shadows in the hollows of the hills,
And wide the upland glows.

And, when the eve is born,
In the blue lake the sky, o'er-reaching far,
Is hollowed out, and the moon dips her horn,
And twinkles many a star.

Inverted in the tide,
Stand the grey rocks, and trembling shadows throw;
And the fair trees look over, side by side,
And see themselves below.

Sweet April !—many a thought
Is wedded unto thee, as hearts are wed;
Nor shall they fail, till, to its autumn brought,
Life's golden fruit is shed.

AUTUMN

With what a glory comes and goes the year !
The buds of spring, those beautiful harbingers
Of sunny skies and cloudless times, enjoy
Life's newness, and earth's garniture spread out.
And when the silvery habit of the clouds
Comes down upon the autumn sun, and with
A sober gladness the old year takes up
His bright inheritance of golden fruits,
A pomp and pageant fill the splendid scene.

There is a beautiful spirit breathing now
Its mellow richness on the clustered trees,
And, from a beaker full of richest dyes,
Pouring new glory on the autumn woods,
And dipping in warm light the pillared clouds.
Morn on the mountain, like a summer bird,
Lifts up her purple wing, and in the vales

The gentle wind, a sweet and passionate wooer,
Kisses the blushing leaf, and stirs up life
Within the solemn woods of ash deep-crimsoned,
And silver beech, and maple yellow-leaved,
Where autumn, like a faint old man, sits down
By the wayside a-weary. Through the trees
The golden robin moves. The purple finch,
That on wild cherry and red cedar feeds,
A winter bird, comes with its plaintive whistle,
And pecks by the witch-hazel, whilst aloud
From cottage roofs the warbling blue-bird sings,
And merrily, with oft-repeated stroke,
Sounds from the threshing-floor the busy flail.

O what a glory doth this world put on
For him who, with a fervent heart, goes forth
Under the bright and glorious sky, and looks
On duties well performed, and days well spent!
For him the wind, ay, and the yellow leaves,
Shall have a voice, and give him eloquent teachings.
He shall so hear the solemn hymn, that Death
Has lifted up for all, that he shall go
To his long resting-place without a tear.

SUNRISE ON THE HILLS

I stood upon the hills, when heaven's wide arch
Was glorious with the sun's returning march,
And woods were brightened, and soft gales
Went forth to kiss the sun-clad vales.
The clouds were far beneath me;—bathed in light,
They gathered mid-way round the wooded height,
And, in their fading glory, shone
Like hosts in battle overthrown,
As many a pinnacle, with shifting glance,
Through the grey mist thrust up its shattered lance,
And rocking on the cliff was left
The dark pine blasted, bare, and cleft.

The veil of cloud was lifted, and below
Glowed the rich valley, and the river's flow
Was darkened by the forest's shade,
Or glistened in the white cascade ;
Where upward, in the mellow blush of day,
The noisy bittern wheeled his spiral way.

I heard the distant waters dash,
I saw the current whirl and flash,—
And richly, by the blue lake's silver beach,
The woods were bending with a silent reach.
Then o'er the vale, with gentle swell,
The music of the village bell
Came sweetly to the echo-giving hills ;
And the wild horn, whose voice the woodland fills,
Was ringing to the merry shout,
That faint and far the glen sent out,
Where, answering to the sudden shot, thin smoke,
Through thick-leaved branches, from the dingle broke.

If thou art worn and hard beset
With sorrows, that thou wouldst forget,
If thou wouldst read a lesson, that will keep
Thy heart from fainting and thy soul from sleep,
Go to the woods and hills !—No tears
Dim the sweet look that Nature wears.

WOODS IN WINTER

When Winter winds are piercing chill,
And through the hawthorn blows the gale,
With solemn feet I tread the hill
That overbrows the lonely vale.

O'er the bare upland, and away
Through the long reach of desert woods,
The embracing sunbeams chastely play,
And gladden these deep solitudes.

Where, twisted round the barren oak,
The summer vine in beauty clung,
And summer winds the stillness broke,
The crystal icicle is hung.

Where, from their frozen urns, mute springs
Pour out the river's gradual tide,
Shrilly the skaters' iron rings,
And voices fill the woodland side.

Alas! how changed from the fair scene,
When birds sang out their mellow lay,
And winds were soft, and woods were green,
And the song ceased not with the day.

But still wild music is abroad,
Pale, desert woods! within your crowd;
And gathering winds, in hoarse accord,
Amid the vocal reeds pipe loud.

Chill airs and wintry winds! my ear
Has grown familiar with your song;
I hear it in the opening year,—
I listen, and it cheers me long.

HYMN OF THE MORAVIAN NUNS OF BETHLEHEM

AT THE CONSECRATION OF PULASKI'S BANNER

When the dying flame of day
Through the chancel shot its ray,
Far the glimmering tapers shed
Faint light on the cowlèd head;
And the censer burning swung,
Where, before the altar, hung
The blood-red banner, that with prayer
Had been consecrated there.

And the nun's sweet hymn was heard the while,
Sung low in the dim, mysterious aisle.

"Take thy banner! May it wave
Proudly o'er the good and brave;
When the battle's distant wail
Breaks the sabbath of our vale,
When the clarion's music thrills
To the hearts of these lone hills,
When the spear in conflict shakes,
And the strong lance shivering breaks.

"Take thy banner! and, beneath
The battle-cloud's encircling wreath,
Guard it!—till our homes are free!
Guard it!—God will prosper thee!
In the dark and trying hour,
In the breaking forth of power,
In the rush of steeds and men,
His right hand will shield thee then.

"Take thy banner! But, when night
Closes round the ghastly fight,
If the vanquished warrior bow,
Spare him!—By our holy vow,
By our prayers and many tears,
By the mercy that endears,
Spare him!—he our love hath shared!
Spare him!—as thou wouldst be spared!

"Take thy banner!—and if e'er
Thou shouldst press the soldier's bier,
And the muffled drums should beat
To the tread of mournful feet,
Then this crimson flag shall be
Martial cloak and shroud for thee."

The warrior took that banner proud,
And it was his martial cloak and shroud!

BURIAL OF THE MINNISINK

On sunny slope and beechen swell,
The shadowed light of evening fell ;
And, where the maple's leaf was brown,
With soft and silent lapse came down
The glory, that the wood receives,
At sunset, in its brazen leaves.

Far upward in the mellow light
Rose the blue hills. One cloud of white,
Around a far uplifted cone,
In the warm blush of evening shone ;
An image of the silver lakes,
By which the Indian's soul awakes.

But soon a funeral hymn was heard
Where the soft breath of evening stirred
The tall, grey forest ; and a band
Of stern in heart, and strong in hand,
Came winding down beside the wave,
To lay the red chief in his grave.

They sang, that by his native bowers
He stood in the last moon of flowers,
And thirty snows had not yet shed
Their glory on the warrior's head ;
But, as the summer fruit decays,
So died he in those naked days.

A dark cloak of the roebuck's skin
Covered the warrior, and within
Its heavy folds the weapons, made
For the hard toils of war were laid ;
The cuirass, woven of plaited reeds,
And the broad belt of shells and beads.

Before, a dark-haired virgin train
Chanted the death-dirge of the slain;
Behind, the long procession came
Of hoary men and chiefs of fame,
With heavy hearts, and eyes of grief,
Leading the war-horse of their chief.

Stripped of his proud and martial dress,
Uncurbed, unreined, and riderless,
With darting eye, and nostril spread,
And heavy and impatient tread,
He came; and oft that eye so proud
Asked for his rider in the crowd.

They buried the dark chief—they freed
Beside the grave his battle steed;
And swift an arrow cleaved its way
To his stern heart! One piercing neigh
Arose,—and, on the dead man's plain,
The rider grasps his steed again.

THE SPIRIT OF POETRY

There is a quiet spirit in these woods,
That dwells where'er the gentle south wind blows;
Where, underneath the white-thorn, in the glade,
The wild-flowers bloom, or, kissing the soft air,
The leaves above their sunny palms outspread.
With what a tender and impassioned voice
It fills the nice and delicate ear of thought,
When the fast-ushering star of Morning comes
O'er-riding the grey hills with golden scarf;
Or when the cowled and dusky-sandaled Eve,
In mourning weeds, from out the western gate,
Departs with silent pace! That spirit moves
In the green valley, where the silver brook,
From its full laver, pours the white cascade;
And, babbling low amid the tangled woods,

Slips down through moss-grown stones with endless laughter.
And frequent, on the everlasting hills,
Its feet go forth, when it doth wrap itself
In all the dark embroidery of the storm,
And shouts the stern, strong wind. And here, amid
The silent majesty of these deep woods,
Its presence shall uplift thy thoughts from earth,
As to the sunshine and the pure, bright air
Their tops the green trees lift. Hence gifted bards
Have ever loved the calm and quiet shades.
For them there was an eloquent voice in all
The sylvan pomp of woods, the golden sun,
The flowers, the leaves, the river on its way,
Blue skies, and silver clouds, and gentle winds,—
The swelling upland, where the sidelong sun
Aslant the wooded slope, at evening, goes,—
Groves, through whose broken roof the sky looks in,
Mountain, and shattered cliff, and sunny vale,
The distant lake, fountains, and mighty trees,
In many a lazy syllable, repeating
Their old poetic legends to the wind.

And this is the sweet spirit, that doth fill
The world; and, in these wayward days of youth,
My busy fancy oft embodies it,
As a bright image of the light and beauty
That dwell in nature,—of the heavenly forms
We worship in our dreams, and the soft hues
That stain the wild bird's wing, and flush the clouds
When the sun sets. Within her eye
The heaven of April, with its changing light,
And when it wears the blue of May, is hung,
And on her lip the rich, red rose. Her hair
Is like the summer tresses of the trees,
When twilight makes them brown, and on her cheek
Blushes the richness of an autumn sky,

With ever-shifting beauty. Then her breath,—
It is so like the gentle air of Spring,
As, from the morning's dewy flowers, it comes
Full of their fragrance, that it is a joy
To have it round us,—and her silver voice
Is the rich music of a summer bird,
Heard in the still night, with its passionate cadence.

VOICES OF THE NIGHT

1839

Πότνια, πότνια νύξ,
ὑπνοδότειρα τῶν πολυπόνων βροτῶν,
Ἐρεβόθεν ἴθι· μόλε μόλε κατάπτερος
Ἀγαμεμνόνιον ἐπὶ δόμον·
ὑπὸ γὰρ ἀλγέων, ὑπό τε συμφορᾶς
διοιχόμεθ', οἰχόμεθα.—EURIPIDES.

PRELUDE

PLEASANT it was, when woods were green,
And winds were soft and low,
To lie amid some sylvan scene,
Where, the long drooping boughs between,
Shadows dark and sunlight sheen
Alternate come and go;

Or, where the denser grove receives
No sunlight from above,
But the dark foliage interweaves
In one unbroken roof of leaves,
Underneath whose sloping eaves
The shadows hardly move.

Beneath some patriarchal tree,
I lay upon the ground;
His hoary arms uplifted he,
And all the broad leaves over me
Clapped their little hands in glee,
With one continuous sound;—

A slumberous sound,—a sound that brings
The feelings of a dream,—
As of innumerable wings;
As, when a bell no longer swings,
Faint the hollow murmur rings
O'er meadow, lake, and stream.

And dreams of that which cannot die,
Bright visions, came to me,
As lapped in thought I used to lie,
And gaze into the summer sky,
Where the sailing clouds went by,
Like ships upon the sea;

Dreams that the soul of youth engage
Ere fancy has been quelled;
Old legends of the monkish page,
Traditions of the saint and sage,
Tales that have the rime of age,
And chronicles of eld.

And, loving still these quaint old themes,
Even in the city's throng
I feel the freshness of the streams,
That, crossed by shades and sunny gleams,
Water the green land of dreams,
The holy land of song.

Therefore, at Pentecost, which brings
The Spring, clothed like a bride,
When nestling buds unfold their wings,
And bishop's-caps have golden rings,
Musing upon many things,
I sought the woodlands wide.

The green trees whispered low and mild;
It was a sound of joy!
They were my playmates when a child,
And rocked me in their arms so wild!
Still they looked at me and smiled,
As if I were a boy;

And ever whispered, mild and low,
"Come, be a child once more!"
And waved their long arms to and fro,
And beckoned solemnly and slow;
Oh, I could not choose but go
Into the woodlands hoar;

Into the blithe and breathing air,
Into the solemn wood,
Solemn and silent everywhere!
Nature with folded hands seemed there,
Kneeling at her evening prayer!
Like one in prayer I stood.

Before me rose an avenue
Of tall and sombrous pines;
Abroad their fan-like branches grew,
And, where the sunshine darted through,
Spread a vapour soft and blue,
In long and sloping lines.

And, falling on my weary brain
Like a fast-falling shower,
The dreams of youth came back again,
Low lispings of the summer rain,
Dropping on the ripened grain,
As once upon the flower.

Visions of childhood! Stay, oh stay!
Ye were so sweet and wild!
And distant voices seemed to say,
"It cannot be! They pass away!
Other themes demand thy lay;
Thou art no more a child!

"The land of song within thee lies,
Watered by living springs;
The lids of Fancy's sleepless eyes
Are gates unto that Paradise,
Holy thoughts, like stars, arise,
Its clouds are angels' wings.

"Learn, that henceforth thy song shall be,
Not mountains capped with snow,
Nor forests sounding like the sea,
Nor rivers flowing ceaselessly,
Where the woodlands bend to see
The bending heavens below.

"There is a forest where the din
Of iron branches sounds!
A mighty river roars between,
And whosoever looks therein,
Sees the heavens all black with sin,—
Sees not its depths nor bounds.

"Athwart the swinging branches cast,
Soft rays of sunshine pour;
Then comes the fearful wintry blast;
Our hopes, like withered leaves, fall fast;
Pallid lips say, 'It is past!
We can return no more!'

"Look, then, into thine heart, and write!
Yes, into Life's deep stream!
All forms of sorrow and delight,
All solemn Voices of the Night,
That can soothe thee, or affright—
Be these henceforth thy theme."

HYMN TO THE NIGHT

'Ασπασίη, τριλλιστος.

I HEARD the trailing garments of the Night
Sweep through her marble halls!
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light
From the celestial walls.

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,
Stoop o'er me from above;
The calm, majestic presence of the Night,
As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,
The manifold, soft chimes,
That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,
Like some old poet's rhymes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air
My spirit drank repose;
The fountain of perpetual peace flows there,—
From those deep cisterns flows.

O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear
What man has borne before:
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,
And they complain no more.

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this prayer;
Descend with broad-winged flight,
The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most fair,
The best belovèd Night!

A PSALM OF LIFE

WHAT THE HEART OF THE YOUNG MAN SAID TO THE PSALMIST

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
"Life is but an empty dream!"
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
"Dust thou art, to dust returnest,"
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;—

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labour and to wait.

FOOTSTEPS OF ANGELS

When the hours of Day are numbered,
And the voices of the Night
Wake the better soul, that slumbered,
To a holy, calm delight;

Ere the evening lamps are lighted,
And, like phantoms grim and tall,
Shadows from the fitful fire-light
Dance upon the parlour wall;

Then the forms of the departed
Enter at the open door;
The belovèd, the true-hearted,
Come to visit me once more;

He, the young and strong, who cherished
Noble longings for the strife,
By the road-side fell and perished,
Weary with the march of life!

They, the holy ones and weakly,
Who the cross of suffering bore,
Folded their pale hands so meekly,
Spake with us on earth no more!

And with them the Being Beauteous,
Who unto my youth was given,
More than all things else to love me,
And is now a saint in heaven.

With a slow and noiseless footstep
Comes that messenger divine,
Takes the vacant chair beside me,
Lays her gentle hand in mine.

And she sits and gazes at me
With those deep and tender eyes,
Like the stars, so still and saint-like,
Looking downward from the skies.

Uttered not, yet comprehended,
Is the spirit's voiceless prayer,
Soft rebukes, in blessings ended,
Breathing from her lips of air.

O, though oft depress'd and lonely,
All my fears are laid aside,
If I but remember only
Such as these have lived and died!

THE REAPER AND THE FLOWERS

There is a Reaper, whose name is Death,
And, with his sickle keen,
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

"Shall I have nought that is fair," saith he;
"Have nought but the bearded grain?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to me,
I will give them all back again."

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
He kissed their drooping leaves;
It was for the Lord of Paradise
He bound them in his sheaves.

"My Lord has need of these flowerets gay,"
The Reaper said, and smiled;
"Dear tokens of the earth are they,
Where He was once a child.

"They shall all bloom in fields of light,
Transplanted by my care,
And saints, upon their garments white,
These sacred blossoms wear."

And the mother gave, in tears and pain,
The flowers she most did love;
She knew she should find them all again
In the fields of light above.

Oh, not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The Reaper came that day;
'Twas an angel visited the green earth,
And took the flowers away.

THE LIGHT OF STARS

The night is come, but not too soon;
And sinking silently,
All silently, the little moon
Drops down behind the sky.

There is no light in earth or heaven,
But the cold light of stars;
And the first watch of night is given
To the red planet Mars.

Is it the tender star of love?
The star of love and dreams?
Oh, no! from that blue tent above
A hero's armour gleams.

And earnest thoughts within me rise,
When I behold afar,
Suspended in the evening skies,
The shield of that red star.

O star of strength ! I see thee stand
And smile upon my pain ;
Thou beckonest with thy mailèd hand,
And I am strong again.

Within my breast there is no light,
But the cold light of stars ;
I give the first watch of the night
To the red planet Mars.

The star of the unconquered will,
He rises in my breast,
Serene, and resolute, and still,
And calm, and self-possessed.

And thou, too, whosoe'er thou art,
That readest this brief psalm,
As one by one thy hopes depart,
Be resolute and calm.

Oh, fear not in a world like this,
And thou shalt know ere long,
Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong.

FLOWERS

Spake full well, in language quaint and olden,
One who dwelleth by the castled Rhine,
When he called the flowers, so blue and golden,
Stars, that in earth's firmament do shine.

Stars they are, wherein we read our history,
As astrologers and seers of eld ;
Yet not wrapped about with awful mystery,
Like the burning stars, which they beheld.

Wondrous truths, and manifold as wondrous,
God hath written in those stars above;
But not less in the bright flowerets under us
Stands the revelation of His love.

Bright and glorious is that revelation,
Written all over this great world of ours;
Making evident our own creation,
In these stars of earth,—those golden flowers.

And the Poet, faithful and far-seeing,
Sees, alike in stars and flowers, a part
Of the self-same universal being
Which is throbbing in his brain and heart.

Gorgeous flowerets in the sunlight shining,
Blossoms flaunting in the eye of day,
Tremulous leaves with soft and silver lining,
Buds that open only to decay;

Brilliant hopes, all woven in gorgeous tissues,
Flaunting gaily in the golden light;
Large desires, with most uncertain issues,
Tender wishes, blossoming at night!

These in flowers and men are more than seeming;
Workings are they of the self-same powers,
Which the Poet, in no idle dreaming,
Seeth in himself and in the flowers.

Everywhere about us are they glowing,
Some like stars, to tell us Spring is born;
Others, their blue eyes with tears o'erflowing,
Stand like Ruth amid the golden corn;

Not alone in Spring's armorial bearing,
And in Summer's green emblazoned field,
But in arms of brave old Autumn's wearing,
In the centre of his brazen shield;

Not alone in meadows and green alleys,
On the mountain-top, and by the brink
Of sequestered pools in woodland valleys,
Where the slaves of Nature stoop to drink;

Not alone in her vast dome of glory,
Not on graves of bird and beast alone,
But in old cathedrals, high and hoary,
On the tombs of heroes, carved in stone;

In the cottage of the rudest peasant,
In ancestral homes, whose crumbling towers,
Speaking of the Past unto the Present,
Tell us of the ancient Games of Flowers;

In all places, then, and in all seasons,
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings,
Teaching us, by most persuasive reasons,
How akin they are to human things.

And with childlike, credulous affection
We behold their tender buds expand;
Emblems of our own great resurrection,
Emblems of the bright and better land.

THE BELEAGUERED CITY

I HAVE read, in some old marvellous tale,
Some legend strange and vague,
That a midnight host of spectres pale
Beleaguered the walls of Prague.

Beside the Moldau's rushing stream,
With the wan moon overhead,
There stood, as in an awful dream,
The army of the dead.

White as a sea-fog, landward bound,
The spectral camp was seen,
And, with a sorrowful, deep sound,
The river flowed between.

No other voice nor sound was there,
No drum, nor sentry's pace;
The mist-like banners clasped the air
As clouds with clouds embrace.

But, when the old cathedral bell
Proclaimed the morning prayer,
The white pavilions rose and fell
On the alarmèd air.

Down the broad valley fast and far
The troubled army fled;
Up rose the glorious morning star,
The ghastly host was dead.

I have read, in the marvellous heart of man,
That strange and mystic scroll,
That an army of phantoms vast and wan
Beleaguer the human soul.

Encamped beside Life's rushing stream,
In Fancy's misty light,
Gigantic shapes and shadows gleam
Portentous through the night.

Upon its midnight battle-ground
The spectral camp is seen,
And, with a sorrowful, deep sound,
Flows the River of Life between.

No other voice nor sound is there,
In the army of the grave;
No other challenge breaks the air,
But the rushing of Life's wave.

And, when the solemn and deep church-bell
Entreats the soul to pray,
The midnight phantoms feel the spell,
The shadows sweep away.

Down the broad Vale of Tears afar
The spectral camp is fled;
Faith shineth as a morning star,
Our ghastly fears are dead.

MIDNIGHT MASS FOR THE DYING YEAR

Yes, the Year is growing old,
And his eye is pale and bleared!
Death, with frosty hand and cold,
Plucks the old man by the beard,
Sorely,—sorely!

The leaves are falling, falling,
Solemnly and slow;
Caw! caw! the rooks are calling,
It is a sound of woe,
A sound of woe!

Through woods and mountain-passes
The winds, like anthems, roll;
They are chanting solemn masses,
Singing, "Pray for this poor soul,
Pray,—pray!"

And the hooded clouds, like friars,
Tell their beads in drops of rain,
And patter their doleful prayers;—
But their prayers are all in vain,
All in vain!

There he stands in the foul weather,
The foolish, fond Old Year,
Crowned with wild flowers and with heather,
Like weak, despisèd Lear,
A king,—a king!

Then comes the summer-like day,
Bids the old man rejoice!
His joy! his last! Oh, the old man grey
Loveth that ever-soft voice,
Gentle and low.

To the crimson woods he saith,
To the voice gentle and low
Of the soft air, like a daughter's breath,
"Pray do not mock me so!
Do not laugh at me!"

And now the sweet day is dead!
Cold in his arms it lies;
No stain from its breath is spread
Over the glassy skies,
No mist or stain!

Then, too, the Old Year dieth,
And the forests utter a moan,
Like the voice of one who crieth
In the wilderness alone,
"Vex not his ghost!"

Then comes, with an awful roar,
Gathering and sounding on,
The storm-wind from Labrador,
The wind Euroclydon,
The storm-wind!

Howl! howl! and from the forest
Sweep the red leaves away!
Would the sins that thou abhorrest,
O Soul! could thus decay,
And be swept away!

For there shall come a mightier blast,
There shall be a darker day;
And the stars, from heaven down-cast,
Like red leaves be swept away!
Kyrie, eleyson!
Christe, eleyson!

L'ENVOI

Ye voices, that arose
After the Evening's close,
And whispered to my restless heart repose!

Go, breathe it in the ear
Of all who doubt and fear,
And say to them, "Be of good cheer!"

Ye sounds, so low and calm,
That in the groves of balm
Seemed to me like an angel's psalm!

Go, mingle yet once more
With the perpetual roar
Of the pine forest, dark and hoar!

Tongues of the dead, not lost,
But speaking from death's frost,
Like fiery tongues at Pentecost!

Glimmer, as funeral lamps,
Amid the chills and damps
Of the vast plain where Death encamps!

BALLADS

1842

THE SKELETON IN ARMOUR

PREFATORY NOTE

THE following Ballad was suggested to me while riding on the seashore at Newport. A year or two previous a skeleton had been dug up at Fall River, clad in broken and corroded armour; and the idea occurred to me of connecting it with the Round Tower at Newport, generally known hitherto as the Old Windmill, though now claimed by the Danes as a work of their early ancestors. Professor Rafn, in the *Mémoires de la Société Royale des Antiquaires du Nord*, for 1838–39, says:—

"There is no mistaking in this instance the style in which the more ancient stone edifices of the North were constructed, the style which belongs to the Roman or Ante-Gothic architecture, and which, especially after the time of Charlemagne, diffused itself from Italy over the whole of the West and North of Europe, where it continued to predominate until the close of the twelfth century; that style which some authors have, from one of its most striking characteristics, called the round-arch style, the same which in England is denominated Saxon and sometimes Norman architecture.

"On the ancient structure in Newport there are no ornaments remaining which might possibly have served to guide us in assigning the probable date of its erection. That no vestige whatever is found of the pointed arch, nor any approximation to it, is indicative of an earlier rather than of a later period. From such characteristics as remain, however, we can scarcely form any other inference than one, in which I am persuaded that all who are familiar with Old Northern architecture will concur, THAT THIS BUILDING WAS ERECTED AT A PERIOD DECIDEDLY NOT LATER THAN THE TWELFTH CENTURY.

This remark applies, of course, to the original building only, and not to the alterations that it subsequently received; for there are several such alterations in the upper part of the building which cannot be mistaken, and which were most likely occasioned by its being adapted in modern times to various uses, for example, as the substructure of a windmill, and latterly as a hay magazine. To the same times may be referred the windows, the fireplace, and the apertures made above the columns. That this building could not have been erected for a windmill is what an architect will easily discern."

I will not enter into a discussion of the point. It is sufficiently well established for the purpose of a ballad, though doubtless many an honest citizen of Newport, who has passed his days within sight of the Round Tower, will be ready to exclaim with Sancho, "God bless me! did I not warn you to have a care of what you were doing, for that it was nothing but a windmill? and nobody could mistake it but one who had the like in his head."

"Speak! speak! thou fearful guest!
Who, with thy hollow breast
Still in rude armour drest,
Comes to daunt me!
Wrapt not in Eastern balms,
But with thy fleshless palms
Stretched, as if asking alms,
Why dost thou haunt me?"

Then, from those cavernous eyes
Pale flashes seemed to rise,
As when the Northern skies
Gleam in December;
And, like the water's flow
Under December's snow,
Came a dull voice of woe
From the heart's chamber.

"I was a Viking old!
My deeds, though manifold,
No Skald in song has told,
No Saga taught thee!

Take heed, that in thy verse
Thou dost the tale rehearse,
Else dread a dead man's curse!
For this I sought thee.

"Far in the Northern Land,
By the wild Baltic's strand,
I, with my childish hand,
Tamed the ger-falcon;
And, with my skates fast-bound,
Skimmed the half-frozen Sound,
That the poor whimpering hound
Trembled to walk on.

"Oft to his frozen lair
Tracked I the grisly bear,
While from my path the hare
Fled like a shadow;
Oft through the forest dark
Followed the were-wolf's bark,
Until the soaring lark
Sang from the meadow.

"But when I older grew,
Joining a corsair's crew,
O'er the dark sea I flew
With the marauders.
Wild with the life we led;
Many the souls that sped,
Many the hearts that bled,
By our stern orders.

"Many a wassail-bout
Wore the long Winter out;
Often our midnight shout
Set the cocks crowing,
As we the Berserk's tale
Measured in cups of ale,
Draining the oaken pail,
Filled to o'erflowing.

"Once, as I told in glee
Tales of the stormy sea,
Soft eyes did gaze on me,
Burning, yet tender;
And as the white stars shine
On the dark Norway pine,
On that dark heart of mine
Fell their soft splendour.

"I wooed the blue-eyed maid,
Yielding, yet half afraid,
And in the forest's shade
Our vows were plighted.
Under its loosened vest
Fluttered her little breast,
Like birds within their nest
By the hawk frighted.

"Bright in her father's hall
Shields gleamed upon the wall,
Loud sang the minstrels all,
Chanting his glory;
When of old Hildebrand
I asked his daughter's hand,
Mute did the minstrel stand
To hear my story.

"While the brown ale he quaffed,
Loud then the champion laughed,
And as the wind-gusts waft
The sea-foam brightly,
So the loud laugh of scorn,
Out of those lips unshorn,
From the deep drinking-horn
Blew the foam lightly.

"She was a Prince's child,
I but a Viking wild,
And though she blushed and smiled,
I was discarded!

Should not the dove so white
Follow the sea-mew's flight,
Why did they leave that night
Her nest unguarded?

"Scarce had I put to sea,
Bearing the maid with me,—
Fairest of all was she
Among the Norsemen!—
When on the white-sea strand,
Waving his armèd hand,
Saw we old Hildebrand,
With twenty horsemen.

"Then launched they to the blast,
Bent like a reed each mast,
Yet we were gaining fast,
When the wind failed us;
And with a sudden flaw
Came round the gusty Skaw,
So that our foe we saw
Laugh as he hailed us.

"And as to catch the gale
Round veered the flapping sail,
Death! was the helmsman's hail,
Death without quarter!
Mid-ships with iron-keel
Struck we her ribs of steel;
Down her black hulk did reel
Through the black water.

"As with his wings aslant,
Sails the fierce cormorant,
Seeking some rocky haunt,
With his prey laden:
So toward the open main,
Beating the sea again,
Through the wild hurricane,
Bore I the maiden.

"Three weeks we westward bore,
And when the storm was o'er,
Cloud-like we saw the shore
Stretching to leeward;
There for my lady's bower
Built I the lofty tower,
Which, to this very hour,
Stands looking seaward.

"There lived we many years;
Time dried the maiden's tears;
She had forgot her fears,
She was a mother;
Death closed her mild blue eyes,
Under that tower she lies;
Ne'er shall the sun arise
On such another!

"Still grew my bosom then,
Still as a stagnant fen!
Hateful to me were men,
The sunlight hateful!
In the vast forest here,
Clad in my warlike gear,
Fell I upon my spear,
Oh, death was grateful!

"Thus, seamed with many scars,
Bursting these prison bars,
Up to its native stars
My soul ascended!
There from the flowing bowl
Deep drinks the warrior's soul,
Skoal! to the Northland! *Skoal!*"[1]
—Thus the tale ended.

[1] In Scandinavia this is the customary salutation when drinking a health. I have slightly changed the orthography of the word, in order to preserve the correct pronunciation.

THE WRECK OF THE *HESPERUS*

It was the schooner *Hesperus*,
That sailed the wintry sea;
And the skipper had taken his little daughtèr,
To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,
Her cheeks like the dawn of day,
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,
That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
His pipe was in his mouth,
And he watched how the veering flaw did blow
The smoke now West, now South.

Then up and spake an old Sailòr,
Had sailed the Spanish Main,
"I pray thee, put into yonder port,
For I fear a hurricane.

"Last night the moon had a golden ring,
And to-night no moon we see!"
The skipper he blew a whiff from his pipe,
And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and louder blew the wind,
A gale from the North-east;
The snow fell hissing in the brine,
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain
The vessel in its strength;
She shuddered and paused, like a frighted steed,
Then leaped her cable's length.

"Come hither! come hither! my little daughtèr,
And do not tremble so;
For I can weather the roughest gale
That ever wind did blow."

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat,
Against the stinging blast;
He cut a rope from a broken spar,
And bound her to the mast.

"O father! I hear the church-bells ring,
O say what may it be?"
"'Tis a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast!"—
And he steered for the open sea.

"O father! I hear the sound of guns,
O say, what may it be?"
"Some ship in distress, that cannot live
In such an angry sea!"

"O father, I see a gleaming light,
O say, what may it be?"
But the father answered never a word,
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,
With his face turned to the skies,
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed
That savèd she might be;
And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave,
On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
Through the whistling sleet and snow,
Like a sheeted ghost the vessel swept
Towards the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between
A sound came from the land;
It was the sound of the trampling surf,
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
She drifted a dreary wreck,
And a whooping billow swept the crew
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves
Look soft as carded wool,
But the cruel rocks, they gored her side
Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,
With the masts went by the board;
Like a vessel of glass, she stove and sank,
Ho! ho! the breakers roared!

At daybreak, on a bleak sea-beach,
A fisherman stood aghast,
To see the form of a maiden fair,
Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,
The salt tears in her eyes;
And he saw her hair, like the brown sea-weed,
On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the *Hesperus*,
In the midnight and the snow;
Christ save us all from a death like this,
On the reef of Norman's Woe!

POEMS ON SLAVERY

1842

[The following Poems, with one exception, were written at sea, in the latter part of October 1842. I had not then heard of Dr. Channing's death. Since that event, the poem addressed to him is no longer appropriate. I have decided, however, to let it remain as it was written, in testimony of my admiration for a great and good man.]

TO WILLIAM E. CHANNING

The pages of thy book I read,
And as I closed each one,
My heart, responding, ever said,
"Servant of God! well done!"

Well done! Thy words are great and bold;
At times they seem to me
Like Luther's, in the days of old,
Half-battles for the free.

Go on, until this land revokes
The old and chartered Lie,
The feudal curse, whose whips and yokes
Insult humanity.

A voice is ever at thy side,
Speaking in tones of might,
Like the prophetic voice, that cried
To John in Patmos, "Write!"

Write ! and tell out this bloody tale ;
Record this dire eclipse,
This Day of Wrath, this Endless Wail,
This dread Apocalypse !

THE SLAVE'S DREAM

Beside the ungathered rice he lay,
His sickle in his hand ;
His breast was bare, his matted hair
Was buried in the sand.
Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,
He saw his Native Land.

Wide through the landscape of his dreams
The lordly Niger flowed ;
Beneath the palm-trees on the plain
Once more a king he strode ;
And heard the tinkling caravans
Descend the mountain-road.

He saw once more his dark-eyed queen
Among her children stand ;
They clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks,
They held him by the hand !—
A tear burst from the sleeper's lids,
And fell into the sand.

And then at furious speed he rode
Along the Niger's bank ;
His bridle-reins were golden chains,
And, with a martial clank,
At each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel
Smiting his stallion's flank.

Before him, like a blood-red flag,
The bright flamingoes flew;
From morn till night he followed their flight,
O'er plains where the tamarind grew,
Till he saw the roofs of Caffre huts,
And the ocean rose to view.

At night he heard the lion roar,
And the hyæna scream;
And the river-horse as he crushed the reeds
Beside some hidden stream;
And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums,
Through the triumph of his dream.

The forests, with their myriad tongues,
Shouted of liberty;
And the Blast of the Desert cried aloud,
With a voice so wild and free,
That he started in his sleep and smiled
At their tempestuous glee.

He did not feel the driver's whip,
Nor the burning heat of day;
For death had illumined the Land of Sleep,
And his lifeless body lay
A worn-out fetter, that the soul
Had broken and thrown away!

THE SLAVE IN THE DISMAL SWAMP

In dark fens of the Dismal Swamp
The hunted Negro lay;
He saw the fire of the midnight camp,
And heard at times a horse's tramp,
And a bloodhound's distant bay.

Where will-o'-the-wisps and glow-worms shine,
In bulrush and in brake;
Where waving mosses shroud the pine,
And the cedar grows, and the poisonous vine
Is spotted like the snake;

Where hardly a human foot could pass,
Or a human heart would dare,
On the quaking turf of the green morass
He crouched in the rank and tangled grass,
Like a wild beast in his lair.

A poor old slave, infirm and lame;
Great scars deformed his face;
On his forehead he bore the brand of shame,
And the rags, that hid his mangled frame,
Were the livery of disgrace.

All things above were bright and fair,
All things were glad and free;
Lithe squirrels darted here and there,
And wild birds filled the echoing air
With songs of Liberty!

On him alone was the doom of pain,
From the morning of his birth;
On him alone the curse of Cain
Fell, like a flail on the garnered grain,
And struck him to the earth!

THE GOOD PART THAT SHALL NOT BE TAKEN AWAY

She dwells by great Kenhawa's side,
In valleys green and cool;
And all her hope and all her pride
Are in the village school.

Her soul, like the transparent air
That robes the hills above,
Though not of earth, encircles there
All things with arms of love.

And thus she walks among her girls
With praise and mild rebukes;
Subduing even rude village churls
By her angelic looks.

She reads to them at eventide
Of One who came to save;
To cast the captive's chains aside,
And liberate the slave.

And oft the blessed time foretells
When all men shall be free;
And musical, as silver bells,
Their falling chains shall be.

And following her beloved Lord,
In decent poverty,
She makes her life one sweet record
And deed of charity.

For she was rich and gave up all
To break the iron bands
Of those who waited in her hall,
And laboured in her lands.

Long since beyond the Southern Sea
Their outbound sails have sped,
While she, in meek humility,
Now earns her daily bread.

It is their prayers, which never cease,
That clothe her with such grace;
Their blessing is the light of peace
That shines upon her face.

THE QUADROON GIRL

The Slaver in the broad lagoon
Lay moored with idle sail;
He waited for the rising moon,
And for the evening gale.

Under the shore his boat was tied,
And all her listless crew
Watched the gray alligator slide
Into the still bayou.

Odours of orange-flowers, and spice,
Reached them from time to time,
Like airs that breathe from Paradise
Upon a world of crime.

The Planter, under his roof of thatch,
Smoked thoughtfully and slow;
The Slaver's thumb was on the latch,
He seemed in haste to go.

He said, "My ship at anchor rides
In yonder broad lagoon;
I only wait the evening tides,
And the rising of the moon."

Before them, with her face upraised,
In timid attitude,
Like one half curious, half amazed,
A Quadroon maiden stood.

Her eyes were large, and full of light,
Her arms and neck were bare;
No garment she wore, save a kirtle bright,
And her own long, raven hair.

And on her lips there played a smile
As holy, meek, and faint,
As lights in some cathedral aisle
The features of a saint.

"The soil is barren,—the farm is old;"
The thoughtful Planter said;
Then looked upon the Slaver's gold,
And then upon the maid.

His heart within him was at strife
With such accursèd gains;
For he knew whose passions gave her life,
Whose blood ran in her veins.

But the voice of nature was too weak;
He took the glittering gold!
Then pale as death grew the maiden's cheek,
Her hands as icy cold.

The Slaver led her from the door,
He led her by the hand,
To be his slave and paramour
In a strange and distant land!

THE WITNESSES

In Ocean's wide domains,
Half buried in the sands,
Lie skeletons in chains,
With shackled feet and hands.

Beyond the fall of dews,
Deeper than plummet lies,
Float ships with all their crews,
No more to sink nor rise.

There the black Slave-ship swims,
  Freighted with human forms,
Whose fettered, fleshless limbs
  Are not the sport of storms.

These are the bones of Slaves;
  They gleam from the abyss;
They cry from yawning waves,
  "We are the Witnesses!"

Within Earth's wide domains
  Are markets for men's lives;
Their necks are galled with chains,
  Their wrists are cramped with gyves.

Dead bodies, that the kite
  In deserts makes its prey;
Murders, that with affright
  Scare schoolboys from their play!

All evil thoughts and deeds;
  Anger, and lust, and pride;
The foulest, rankest weeds,
  That choke Life's groaning tide!

These are the woes of Slaves;
  They glare from the abyss;
They cry from unknown graves
  "We are the Witnesses!"

THE WARNING

Beware! The Israelite of old, who tore
  The lion in his path,—when, poor and blind,
He saw the blessed light of heaven no more,
  Shorn of his noble strength and forced to grind
In prison, and at last led forth to be
A pander to Philistine revelry,—

Upon the pillars of the temple laid
His desperate hands, and in its overthrow
Destroyed himself, and with him those who made
A cruel mockery of his sightless woe ;
The poor, blind Slave, the scoff and jest of all,
Expired, and thousands perished in the fall !

There is a poor, blind Samson in this land,
Shorn of his strength, and bound in bonds of steel
Who may, in some grim revel, raise his hand,
And shake the pillars of this Commonweal,
Till the vast Temple of our liberties
A shapeless mass of wreck and rubbish lies.

THE SLAVE SINGING AT MIDNIGHT

Loud he sang the Psalm of David !
He, a Negro, and enslaved,
Sang of Israel's victory,
Sang of Zion, bright and free.

In that hour, when night is calmest,
Sang he from the Hebrew Psalmist,
In a voice so sweet and clear
That I could not choose but hear.

Songs of triumph, and ascriptions,
Such as reached the swart Egyptians,
When upon the Red Sea coast
Perished Pharaoh and his host.

And the voice of his devotion
Filled my soul with strange emotion ;
For its tones by turns were glad,
Sweetly solemn, wildly sad.

Paul and Silas, in their prison,
Sang of Christ, the Lord arisen,
And an earthquake's arm of might
Broke their dungeon-gates at night.

But, alas ! what holy angel
Brings the slave this glad evangel?
And what earthquake's arm of might
Breaks his dungeon-gates at night?

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

1841–46

IT IS NOT ALWAYS MAY

NO HAY PÁJAROS EN LOS NIDOS DE ANTAÑO
—*Spanish Proverb.*

The sun is bright, the air is clear,
The darting swallows soar and sing,
And from the stately elms I hear
The blue-bird prophesying Spring.

So blue yon winding river flows,
It seems an outlet from the sky,
Where, waiting till the west wind blows,
The freighted clouds at anchor lie.

All things are new;—the buds, the leaves,
That gild the elm-tree's nodding crest,
And even the nest beneath the eaves;—
There are no birds in last year's nest!

All things rejoice in youth and love,
The fulness of their first delight!
And learn from the soft heavens above
The melting tenderness of night.

Maiden, that read'st this simple rhyme,
Enjoy thy youth, it will not stay;
Enjoy the fragrance of thy prime,
For O! it is not always May!

Enjoy the Spring of Love and Youth,
To some good angel leave the rest;
For time will teach thee soon the truth,
There are no birds in last year's nest.

THE RAINY DAY

The day is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
The vine still clings to the mouldering wall,
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,
And the day is dark and dreary.

My life is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
My thoughts still cling to the mouldering Past,
But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast,
And the days are dark and dreary.

Be still, sad heart! and cease repining;
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;
Thy fate is the common fate of all,
Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

Under a spreading chestnut-tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
  His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
  He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
  For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
  You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
  With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
  When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
  Look in at the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
  And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
  Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
  And sits among his boys;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
  He hears his daughter's voice,
Singing in the village choir,
  And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
  Singing in Paradise!
He needs must think of her once more,
  How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
  A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling—rejoicing—sorrowing,
  Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begin,
  Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done,
  Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught!
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought.

ENDYMION

The rising moon has hid the stars;
Her level rays, like golden bars,
Lies on the landscape green,
With shadows brown between.

And silver white the river gleams,
As if Diana in her dreams,
Had dropt her silver bow
Upon the meadows low.

On such a tranquil night as this,
She woke Endymion with a kiss,
When sleeping in the grove,
He dreamed not of her love.

Like Dian's kiss, unasked, unsought,
Love gives itself, but is not bought;
Nor voice nor sound betrays
Its deep, impassioned gaze.

It comes—the beautiful, the free,
The crown of all humanity—
In silence and alone
To seek the elected one.

It lifts the boughs, whose shadows deep
Are life's oblivion, the soul's sleep,
And kisses the closed eyes
Of him who slumbering lies.

O, weary hearts! O, slumbering eyes!
O, drooping souls whose destinies
Are fraught with fear and pain,
Ye shall be loved again!

No one is so accursed by fate,
No one so utterly desolate,
But some heart, though unknown,
Responds unto his own.

Responds—as if with unseen wings
An angel touched its quivering strings;
And whispers, in its song,
"Where hast thou stayed so long?"

GOD'S-ACRE

I LIKE that ancient Saxon phrase, which calls
The burial-ground God's-Acre! It is just;
It consecrates each grave within its walls,
And breathes a benison o'er the sleeping dust.

God's-Acre! Yes, that blessed name imparts
Comfort to those who in the grave have sown
The seed, that they had garnered in their hearts,
Their bread of life—alas! no more their own.

Into its furrows shall we all be cast,
In the sure faith that we shall rise again
At the great harvest, when the archangel's blast
Shall winnow, like a fan, the chaff and grain.

Then shall the good stand in immortal bloom,
In the fair gardens of that second birth;
And each bright blossom mingle its perfume
With that of flowers, which never bloomed on earth.

With thy rude ploughshare, Death, turn up the sod,
And spread the furrow for the seed we sow;
This is the field and Acre of our God,
This is the place where human harvests grow.

TO THE RIVER CHARLES

River! that in silence windest
Through the meadows bright and free,
Till at length thy rest thou findest
In the bosom of the sea!

Four long years of mingled feeling,
Half in rest, and half in strife,
I have seen thy waters stealing
Onward, like the stream of life.

Thou hast taught me, Silent River!
Many a lesson, deep and long;
Thou hast been a generous giver;
I can give thee but a song.

Oft in sadness and in illness,
I have watched thy current glide,
Till the beauty of its stillness
Overflowed me, like a tide.

And in better hours and brighter,
When I saw thy waters gleam,
I have felt my heart beat lighter,
And leap onward with thy stream.

Not for this alone I love thee,
Nor because thy waves of blue
From celestial seas above thee
Take their own celestial hue.

Where yon shadowy woodlands hide thee,
And thy waters disappear,
Friends I love have dwelt beside thee,
And have made thy margin dear.

More than this ;—thy name reminds me
Of three friends, all true and tried ;
And that name, like magic, binds me
Closer, closer to thy side.

Friends my soul with joy remembers !
How like quivering flames they start,
When I fan the living embers
On the hearthstone of my heart !

'Tis for this, thou Silent River !
That my spirit leans to thee ;
Thou hast been a generous giver,
Take this idle song from me.

BLIND BARTIMEUS

Blind Bartimeus at the gates
Of Jericho in darkness waits ;
He hears the crowd ;—he hears a breath
Say, "It is Christ of Nazareth !"
And calls in tones of agony,
Ἰησοῦ, ἐλέησόν με !

The thronging multitudes increase ;
Blind Bartimeus, hold thy peace !
But still, above the noisy crowd,
The beggar's cry is shrill and loud ;
Until they say, "He calleth thee !"
Θάρσει, ἔγειραι, φωνεῖ σε !

Then saith the Christ, as silent stands
The crowd, "What wilt thou at my hands?"
And he replies, "O give me light!
Rabbi, restore the blind man's sight!"
And Jesus answers, "Υπαγε·
Ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε!

Ye that have eyes, yet cannot see,
In darkness and in misery,
Recall those mighty Voices three,
Ἰησοῦ, ἐλέησόν με!
Θάρσει, ἔγειραι, Ὑπαγε!
Ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε!

THE GOBLET OF LIFE

Filled is Life's goblet to the brim;
And though my eyes with tears are dim,
I see its sparkling bubbles swim,
And chant a melancholy hymn
With solemn voice and slow.

No purple flowers,—no garlands green,
Conceal the goblet's shade or sheen,
Nor maddening draughts of Hippocrene,
Like gleams of sunshine, flash between
Thick leaves of mistletoe.

This goblet, wrought with curious art,
Is filled with waters, that upstart,
When the deep fountains of the heart,
By strong convulsions rent apart,
Are running all to waste.

And as it mantling passes round,
With fennel is it wreathed and crowned,
Whose seed and foliage sun-imbrowned
Are in its waters steeped and drowned,
And give a bitter taste.

Above the lowly plants it towers,
The fennel, with its yellow flowers,
And in an earlier age than ours
Was gifted with the wondrous powers,
Lost vision to restore.

It gave new strength, and fearless mood;
And gladiators, fierce and rude,
Mingled it in their daily food;
And he who battled and subdued,
A wreath of fennel wore.

Then in Life's goblet freely press
The leaves that give it bitterness,
Nor prize the coloured waters less,
For in thy darkness and distress
New light and strength they give!

And he who has not learned to know
How false its sparkling bubbles show,
How bitter are the drops of woe,
With which its brim may overflow,
He has not learned to live.

The prayer of Ajax was for light;
Through all that dark and desperate fight,
The blackness of that noonday night,
He asked but the return of sight,
To see his foeman's face.

Let our unceasing, earnest prayer
Be, too, for light,—for strength to bear
Our portion of the weight of care,
That crushes into dumb despair
One half the human race.

O suffering, sad humanity!
O ye afflicted ones who lie
Steeped to the lips in misery,
Longing, and yet afraid to die,
Patient, though sorely tried!

I pledge you in this cup of grief,
Where floats the fennel's bitter leaf,
The Battle of our Life is brief,
The alarm,—the struggle,—the relief,—
Then sleep we side by side.

THE SEA-DIVER

My way is on the bright blue sea,
My sleep upon the rocky tide;
And many an eye has followed me,
Where billows clasp the worn sea-side.

My plumage bears the crimson blush,
When ocean by the sun is kissed!
When fades the evening's purple flush,
My dark wing cleaves the silver mist.

Full many a fathom down beneath
The bright arch of the splendid deep,
My ear has heard the sea-shell breathe
O'er living myriads in their sleep.

They rested by the coral throne,
And by the pearly diadem,
Where the pale sea-grape had overgrown
The glorious dwelling made for them.

At night, upon my storm-drenched wing,
I poised above a helmless bark,
And soon I saw the shattered thing
Had passed away and left no mark.

And when the wind and storm had done,
A ship, that had rode out the gale,
Sunk down without a signal-gun,
And none was left to tell the tale.

I saw the pomp of day depart—
The cloud resign its golden crown,
When to the ocean's beating heart
The sailor's wasted corse went down.

Peace be to those whose graves are made
Beneath the bright and silver sea!
Peace that their relics there were laid,
With no vain pride and pageantry.

THE BELFRY OF BRUGES

Carillon. 1845

In the ancient town of Bruges,
In the quaint old Flemish city,
As the evening shades descended,
Low and loud and sweetly blended,
Low at times and loud at times,
And changing like a poet's rhymes,
Rang the beautiful wild chimes,
From the Belfry in the market
Of the ancient town of Bruges.

Then, with deep sonorous clangour
Calmly answering their sweet anger,
When the wrangling bells had ended,
Slowly struck the clock eleven,
And, from out the silent heaven,
Silence on the town descended.
Silence, silence everywhere,
On the earth and in the air,
Save that footsteps here and there
Of some burgher home returning,
By the street lamps faintly burning,
For a moment woke the echoes
Of the ancient town of Bruges.

But amid my broken slumbers
Still I heard those magic numbers,
As they loud proclaimed the flight
And stolen marches of the night;
Till their chimes in sweet collision
Mingled with each wandering vision,
Mingled with the fortune-telling
Gipsy-bands of dreams and fancies,
Which amid the waste expanses
Of the silent land of trances
Have their solitary dwelling.
All else seemed asleep in Bruges,
In the quaint old Flemish city.

And I thought how like these chimes
Are the poet's airy rhymes,
All his rhymes and roundelays,
His conceits, and songs, and ditties,
From the belfry of his brain,
Scattered downward, though in vain,
On the roofs and stones of cities!
For by night the drowsy ear
Under its curtains cannot hear,
And by day men go their ways,
Hearing the music as they pass,
But deeming it no more, alas!
Than the hollow sound of brass.

Yet perchance a sleepless wight,
Lodging at some humble inn
In the narrow lanes of life,
When the dusk and hush of night
Shut out the incessant din
Of daylight and its toil and strife,
May listen with a calm delight
To the poet's melodies,
Till he hears, or dreams he hears,
Intermingled with the song,
Thoughts that he has cherished long;

Hears amid the chime and singing
The bells of his own village ringing,
And wakes, and finds his slumberous eyes
Wet with most delicious tears.

Thus dreamed I, as by night I lay
In Bruges, at the Fleur-de-Blé,
Listening with a wild delight
To the chimes that, through the night,
Rang their changes from the Belfry
Of that quaint old Flemish city.

The Belfry of Bruges

In the market-place of Bruges stands the belfry old and brown;
Thrice consumed and thrice rebuilded, still it watches o'er the town.

As the summer morn was breaking, on that lofty tower I stood,
And the world threw off the darkness, like the weeds of widowhood.

Thick with towns and hamlets studded, and with streams and vapours grey,
Like a shield embossed with silver, round and vast the landscape lay.

At my feet the city slumbered. From its chimneys, here and there,
Wreaths of snow-white smoke, ascending, vanished, ghost-like, into air.

Not a sound rose from the city at that early morning hour,
But I heard a heart of iron beating in the ancient tower.

From their nests beneath the rafters sang the swallows wild and high,
And the world, beneath me sleeping, seemed more distant than the sky.

Then most musical and solemn, bringing back the olden times,
With their strange, unearthly changes rang the melancholy chimes.

Like the psalms from some old cloister, when the nuns sing in the choir;
And the great bell tolled among them, like the chanting of a friar.

Visions of the days departed, shadowy phantoms filled my brain;
They who live in history only seemed to walk the earth again;

All the Foresters of Flanders,[1]—mighty Baldwin Bras de Fer,[2]
Lyderick du Bucq[3] and Cressy, Philip, Guy de Dampierre.[4]

I beheld the pageants splendid, that adorned those days of old;
Stately dames, like queens attended, knights who bore the Fleece of Gold;

Lombard and Venetian merchants with deep-laden argosies;
Ministers from twenty nations; more than royal pomp and ease.

1 The title of "Foresters of Flanders" was given by the French kings to those governors whom they appointed.

2 Who stole the daughter of Charles the Bald from the French court, and married her at Bruges.

3 Lyderick du Bucq was the first governor of Flanders in the reign of Clotaire II.

4 Succeeding Foresters who took the title of Count.

I beheld proud Maximilian,[1] kneeling humbly on the ground;
I beheld the gentle Mary,[2] hunting with her hawk and hound;

And her lighted bridal chamber, where a duke slept with the queen,
And the armèd guard around them, and the sword unsheathed between.[3]

I beheld the Flemish weavers, with Namur and Juliers bold,
Marching homeward from the bloody battle of the Spurs of Gold;[4]

Saw the fight at Minnewater,[5] saw the White Hoods moving West,
Saw great Artevelde victorious scale the Golden Dragon's nest;[6]

And again the whiskered Spaniard all the land with terror smote;
And again the wild alarum sounded from the tocsin's throat;

[1] Archduke of Austria.

[2] The daughter of Charles the Bold, who succeeded him as Duchess of Burgundy and Countess of Flanders, 1471.

[3] See long notes in Appendix.

[4] Fought, 11th of July 1302, between the French and Flemings. The flower of the French nobility perished in it; and it was named from the number of golden spurs found on the field of battle. Seven hundred were hung up in the church of Notre-Dame du Courtray.

[5] The battle at Minnewater was fought with the citizens of Ghent, who wished to prevent the Flemings from opening a canal there. The White Hoods were a military body of Ghent.

[6] The Golden Dragon was taken from Bruges to Antwerp by Philip von Artevelot. It came originally from the Church of St. Sophia in Constantinople.

Till the bell of Ghent responded o'er lagoon and dike of sand,
"I am Roland ! I am Roland![1] there is victory in the land !"

Then the sound of drums aroused me. The awakened city's roar
Chased the phantoms I had summoned back into their graves once more.

Hours had passed away like minutes ; and, before I was aware,
Lo ! the shadow of the belfry crossed the sun-illumined square.

MAIDENHOOD

Maiden ! with the meek, brown eyes,
In whose orbs a shadow lies,
Like the dusk in evening skies !

Thou whose locks outshine the sun,
Golden tresses, wreathed in one,
As the braided streamlets run !

Standing, with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet !

Gazing, with a timid glance,
On the brooklet's swift advance,
On the river's broad expanse !

[1] On the alarm-bell of Bruges is inscribed: "My name is Roland; when I toll, there is fire; when I ring, there is victory in the land."

Deep and still, that gliding stream
Beautiful to thee must seem,
As the river of a dream.

Then why pause with indecision,
When bright angels in thy vision
Beckon thee to fields Elysian?

Seest thou shadows sailing by,
As the dove, with startled eye,
Sees the falcon's shadow fly?

Hearest thou voices on the shore,
That our ears perceive no more,
Deafened by the cataract's roar?

O thou child of many prayers!
Life hath quicksands,—Life hath snares!
Care and age come unawares!

Like the swell of some sweet tune,
Morning rises into noon,
May glides onward into June.

Childhood is the bough, where slumbered
Birds and blossoms many-numbered;—
Age, that bough with snows encumbered.

Gather, then, each flower that grows,
When the young heart overflows,
To embalm that tent of snows.

Bear a lily in thy hand;
Gates of brass cannot withstand
One touch of that magic wand.

Bear through sorrow, wrong, and ruth,
In thy heart the dew of youth,
On thy lips the smile of truth.

O, that dew, like balm, shall steal
Into wounds, that cannot heal,
Even as sleep our eyes doth seal;

And that smile, like sunshine, dart
Into many a sunless heart,
For a smile of God thou art.

THE ARSENAL AT SPRINGFIELD

This is the Arsenal. From floor to ceiling,
Like a huge organ, rise the burnished arms;
But from their silent pipes no anthem pealing
Startles the villages with strange alarms.

Ah! what a sound will rise, how wild and dreary,
When the death-angel touches those swift keys!
What loud lament and dismal Miserere
Will mingle with their awful symphonies!

I hear even now the infinite fierce chorus,
The cries of agony, the endless groan,
Which, through the ages that have gone before us,
In long reverberations reach our own.

On helm and harness rings the Saxon hammer,
Through Cimbric forest roars the Norseman's song,
And loud, amid the universal clamour,
O'er distant deserts sounds the Tartar gong.

I hear the Florentine, who from his palace
Wheels out his battle-bell with dreadful din,
And Aztec priests upon their teocallis
Beat the wild war-drums made of serpent's skin;

The tumult of each sacked and burning village;
The shout that every prayer for mercy drowns;
The soldier's revels in the midst of pillage;
The wail of famine in beleaguered towns;

The bursting shell, the gateway wrenched asunder,
The rattling musketry, the clashing blade;
And ever and anon, in tones of thunder,
The diapason of the cannonade.

Is it, O man, with such discordant noises,
With such accursèd instruments as these,
Thou drownest Nature's sweet and kindly voices,
And jarrest the celestial harmonies?

Were half the power that fills the world with terror,
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error,
There were no need of arsenals nor forts:

The warrior's name would be a name abhorrèd!
And every nation that should lift again
Its hand against a brother, on its forehead
Would wear for evermore the curse of Cain!

Down the dark future, through long generations,
The echoing sounds grow fainter, and then cease;
And like a bell, with solemn, sweet vibrations,
I hear once more the voice of Christ say, "Peace!"

Peace! and no longer from its brazen portals
The blast of War's great organ shakes the skies!
But beautiful as songs of the immortals,
The holy melodies of love arise.

A GLEAM OF SUNSHINE

This is the place. Stand still, my steed,
Let me review the scene,
And summon from the shadowy Past
The forms that once have been.

The Past and Present here unite
Beneath Time's flowing tide,
Like footprints hidden by a brook,
But seen on either side.

Here runs the highway to the town;
There the green lane descends,
Through which I walked to church with thee,
O gentlest of my friends!

The shadow of the linden-trees
Lay moving on the grass;
Between them and the moving boughs,
A shadow, thou didst pass.

Thy dress was like the lilies,
And thy heart as pure as they:
One of God's holy messengers
Did walk with me that day.

I saw the branches of the trees
Bend down thy touch to meet,
The clover-blossoms in the grass
Rise up to kiss thy feet.

"Sleep, sleep to-day, tormenting cares,
Of earth and folly born!"
Solemnly sang the village choir
On that sweet Sabbath morn.

Through the closed blinds the golden sun
Poured in a dusty beam,
Like the celestial ladder seen
By Jacob in his dream.

And ever and anon the wind,
Sweet-scented with the hay,
Turned o'er the hymn-book's fluttering leaves
That on the window lay.

Long was the good man's sermon,
Yet it seemed not so to me ;
For he spake of Ruth the beautiful,
And still I thought of thee.

Long was the prayer he uttered,
Yet it seemed not so to me ;
For in my heart I prayed with him,
And still I thought of thee.

But now, alas ! the place seems changed ;
Thou art no longer here :
Part of the sunshine of the scene
With thee did disappear.

Though thoughts, deep-rooted in my heart,
Like pine-trees, dark and high,
Subdue the light of noon, and breathe
A low and ceaseless sigh ;

This memory brightens o'er the past,
As when the sun, concealed
Behind some cloud that near us hangs,
Shines on a distant field.

NUREMBERG

In the valley of the Pegnitz, where across broad meadow-lands
Rise the blue Franconian mountains, Nuremberg the ancient stands.

Quaint old town of toil and traffic, quaint old town of art and song,
Memories haunt thy pointed gables, like the rooks that round them throng :

Memories of the Middle Ages, when the emperors,
rough and bold,
Had their dwelling in thy castle, time-defying,
centuries old;

And thy brave and thrifty burghers boasted, in
their uncouth rhyme,
That their great imperial city stretched its hand
through every clime.[1]

In the court-yard of the castle, bound with many an
iron band,
Stands the mighty linden planted by Queen Cuni-
gunde's hand;

On the square the oriel window, where in old heroic
days
Sat the poet Melchior[2] singing Kaiser Maximilian's
praise.

Everywhere I see around me rise the wondrous
world of Art:
Fountains wrought with richest sculpture standing
in the common mart;

And above cathedral doorways saints and bishops
carved in stone,
By a former age commissioned as apostles to our
own.

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[1] An ancient proverb of the town ran thus:—

"Nürnberg's Hand
Geht durch alle Land."

Nuremberg's hand
Goes through every land.

[2] Melchior Pfinzing, one of the celebrated German poets of the sixteenth century. The hero of his *Tenerdank* was the reigning Emperor Maximilian (Mary of Burgundy's former husband); the poem was to the Germans of that age what the *Orlando Furioso* was to the Italians.

In the church of sainted Sebald sleeps enshrined his
holy dust,[1]
And in bronze the Twelve Apostles guard from age
to age their trust;

In the church of sainted Lawrence stands a pix of
sculpture rare,
Like the foamy sheaf of fountains, rising through
the painted air.

Here, when Art was still religion, with a simple,
reverent heart,
Lived and laboured Albrecht Dürer, the Evangelist
of Art;

Hence in silence and in sorrow, toiling still with
busy hand,
Like an emigrant he wandered, seeking for the
Better Land.

Emigravit is the inscription on the tombstone where
he lies;
Dead he is not,—but departed,—for the artist never
dies.

Fairer seems the ancient city, and the sunshine
seems more fair,
That he once has trod its pavement, that he once
has breathed its air!

Through these streets so broad and stately, these
obscure and dismal lanes,
Walked of yore the Master-singers, chanting rude
poetic strains.

From remote and sunless suburbs, came they to the
friendly guild,
Building nests in Fame's great temple, as in spouts
the swallows build.

[1] The tomb of St. Sebald in this church is one of the richest works of art in Nuremberg. It was cast in bronze by Peter Vischer and his sons, who laboured on it for thirteen years. It is adorned with nearly a hundred figures, among which are the Twelve Apostles.

As the weaver plied the shuttle, wove he too the mystic rhyme,
And the smith his iron measures hammered to the anvil's chime;

Thanking God, whose boundless wisdom makes the flowers of poesy bloom
In the forge's dust and cinders, in the tissues of the loom.

Here Hans Sachs,[1] the cobbler-poet, laureate of the gentle craft,
Wisest of the Twelve Wise Masters, in huge folios sang and laughed.

But his house is now an ale-house, with a nicely sanded floor,
And a garland in the window, and his face above the door;

Painted by some humble artist, as in Adam Puschman's song,[2]
As "the old man grey and dove-like," with his great beard white and long.

[1] He flourished in the sixteenth century, and left behind him 208 plays, 1700 comic tales, and four or five thousand lyric poems. The Twelve Wise Masters was the title of the original corporation of the Master-singers. Hans Sachs, the cobbler of Nuremberg, though not one of the original Twelve, was the most renowned of the Master-singers, as well as the most voluminous. He left thirty-four folio volumes of manuscript containing the above number of plays, tales, and lyric poetry.

[2] Adam Puschman, in his poem on the death of Hans Sachs, describes him as he appeared in a vision:—

"An old man,
Grey and white, and dove-like,
Who had, in sooth, a great beard;
And read in a fair great book,
Beautiful with golden clasps."

And at night the swart mechanic comes to drown
his cark and care,
Quaffing ale from pewter tankards, in the master's
antique chair.

Vanished is the ancient splendour, and before my
dreamy eye
Wave these mingling shapes and figures, like a
faded tapestry.

Not thy Councils, not thy Kaisers, win for thee the
world's regard ;
But thy painter, Albrecht Dürer, and Hans Sachs,
thy cobbler-bard.

Thus, O Nuremberg, a wanderer from a region far
away,
As he paced thy streets and court-yards, sang in
thought his careless lay :

Gathering from the pavement's crevice, as a floweret
of the soil,
The nobility of labour,—the long pedigree of toil.

THE INDIAN HUNTER

When the summer harvest was gathered in,
And the sheaf of the gleaner grew white and thin,
And the ploughshare was in its furrow left,
Where the stubble land had been lately cleft,
An Indian hunter, with unstrung bow,
Looked down where the valley lay stretched below.

He was a stranger there, and that day
Had been out on the hills, a perilous way,
But the foot of the deer was far and fleet,
And the wolf kept aloof from the hunter's feet,
And bitter feelings passed o'er him then,
As he stood by the populous haunts of men.

The winds of autumn came over the woods,
As the sun stole out from their solitudes;
The moss was white on the maple's trunk,
And dead from its arms the pale vine shrunk,
And ripened the mellow fruit hung, and red
Where the trees' withered leaves around it shed.

The foot of the reaper moved slow on the lawn,
And the sickle cut down the yellow corn;
The mower sang loud by the meadow side,
Where the mists of evening were spreading wide;
And the voice of the herdsman came up the lea,
And the dance went round by the greenwood tree.

Then the hunter turned away from that scene,
Where the home of his fathers once had been,
And heard, by the distant and measured stroke,
That the woodman hewed down the giant oak—
And burning thoughts flashed over his mind,
Of the white man's faith, and love unkind.

The moon of the harvest grew high and bright,
As her golden horn pierced the cloud of white,—
A footstep was heard in the rustling brake,
Where the beech overshadowed the misty lake,
A mourning voice, and a plunge from shore,
And the hunter was seen on the hills no more.

When years had passed on, by that still lake side,
The fisher looked down through the silver tide,
And there, on the smooth yellow sand displayed,
A skeleton wasted and white was laid,
And 'twas seen, as the waters moved deep and slow,
That the hand was still grasping a hunter's bow.

THE NORMAN BARON

[Dans les moments de la vie où la réflexion devient plus calme et plus profonde, où l'intérêt et l'avarice parlent moins haut que la raison, dans les instants de chagrin domestique, de maladie, et de péril de mort, les nobles se repentirent de posséder des serfs, comme d'une chose peu agréable à Dieu, qui avait créé tous les hommes à son image.]

THIERRY, *Conquête de l'Angleterre.*

In his chamber, weak and dying,
Was the Norman baron lying;
Loud, without, the tempest thundered,
And the castle-turret shook.

In this fight was Death the gainer,
Spite of vassal and retainer,
And the lands his sires had plundered,
Written in the Doomsday Book.

By his bed a monk was seated,
Who in a humble voice repeated
Many a prayer and pater-noster,
From the missal on his knee;

And, amid the tempest pealing,
Sounds of bells came faintly stealing,
Bells that, from the neighbouring kloster,
Rang for the Nativity.

In the hall, the serf and vassal
Held, that night, their Christmas wassail;
Many a carol, old and saintly,
Sang the minstrels and the waits.

And so loud these Saxon gleemen
Sang to slaves the songs of freemen,
That the storm was heard but faintly,
Knocking at the castle-gates.

Till at length the lays they chanted
Reached the chamber terror-haunted,
Where the monk, with accents holy,
Whispered at the baron's ear.

Tears upon his eyelids glistened,
As he paused awhile and listened,
And the dying baron slowly
Turned his weary head to hear.

"Wassail for the kingly stranger
Born and cradled in a manger!
King, like David, priest, like Aaron,
Christ is born to set us free!"

And the lightning showed the sainted
Figures on the casement painted,
And exclaimed the shuddering baron,
"Miserere, Domine!"

In that hour of deep contrition,
He beheld, with clearer vision,
Through all outward show and fashion,
Justice, the Avenger, rise.

All the pomp of earth had vanished,
Falsehood and deceit were banished,
Reason spake more loud than passion,
And the truth wore no disguise.

Every vassal of his banner,
Every serf born to his manor,
All those wronged and wretched creatures,
By his hand were freed again.

And, as on the sacred missal
He recorded their dismissal,
Death relaxed his iron features,
And the monk replied, "Amen!"

Many centuries have been numbered
Since in death the baron slumbered
By the convent's sculptured portal,
Mingling with the common dust:

But the good deed, through the ages
Living in historic pages,
Brighter grows and gleams immortal,
Unconsumed by moth or rust.

TO A CHILD

Dear child! how radiant on thy mother's knee,
With merry-making eyes and jocund smiles,
Thou gazest at the painted tiles,
Whose figures grace,
With many a grotesque form and face,
The ancient chimney of thy nursery!
The lady with the gay macaw,
The dancing girl, the brave bashaw
With bearded lip and chin;
And, leaning idly o'er his gate,
Beneath the imperial fan of state,
The Chinese mandarin.

With what a look of proud command
Thou shakest in thy little hand
The coral rattle with its silver bells,
Making a merry tune!
Thousands of years in Indian seas
That coral grew, by slow degrees,
Until some deadly and wild monsoon
Dashed it on Coromandel's sand!
Those silver bells
Reposed of yore,
As shapeless ore,
Far down in the deep sunken wells

Of darksome mines,
In some obscure and sunless place,
Beneath huge Chimborazo's base,
Or Potosi's o'erhanging pines !

And thus for thee, O little child,
Through many a danger and escape,
The tall ships passed the stormy cape ;
For thee in foreign lands remote,
Beneath the burning, tropic clime,
The Indian peasant, chasing the wild goat,
Himself as swift and wild,
In falling, clutched the frail arbute,
The fibres of whose shallow root,
Uplifted from the soil, betrayed
The silver veins beneath it laid,
The buried treasures of the miser, Time.

But, lo ! thy door is left ajar !
Thou hearest footsteps from afar !
And, at the sound,
Thou turnest round
With quick and questioning eyes,
Like one who, in a foreign land,
Beholds on every hand
Some source of wonder and surprise !
And, restlessly, impatiently,
Thou strivest, strugglest, to be free.
The four walls of thy nursery
Are now like prison walls to thee.
No more thy mother's smiles,
No more the painted tiles,
Delight thee, nor the playthings on the floor
That won thy little, beating heart before ;
Thou strugglest for the open door.

Through these once solitary halls
Thy pattering footstep falls.
The sound of thy merry voice
Makes the old walls
Jubilant, and they rejoice

With the joy of thy young heart,
O'er the light of whose gladness
No shadows of sadness
From the sombre background of memory start.

Once, ah, once, within these walls,
One whom memory oft recalls,
The Father of his Country, dwelt.
And yonder meadows broad and damp
The fires of the besieging camp
Encircled with a burning belt.
Up and down these echoing stairs,
Heavy with the weight of cares,
Sounded his majestic tread;
Yes, within this very room
Sat he in those hours of gloom,
Weary both in heart and head.

But what are these grave thoughts to thee?
Out, out! into the open air!
Thy only dream is liberty,
Thou carest little how or where.
I see thee eager at thy play,
Now shouting to the apples on the tree,
With cheeks as round and red as they;
And now among the yellow stalks,
Among the flowering shrubs and plants,
As restless as the bee.
Along the garden walks,
The tracks of thy small carriage-wheels I trace;
And see at every turn how they efface
Whole villages of sand-roofed tents,
That rise like golden domes
Above the cavernous and secret homes
Of wandering and nomadic tribes of ants.
Ah, cruel little Tamerlane,
Who, with thy dreadful reign,
Dost persecute and overwhelm
These hapless Troglodytes of thy realm!

What! tired already! with those suppliant looks,
And voice more beautiful than a poet's books,
Or murmuring sound of water as it flows,
Thou comest back to parley with repose!
This rustic seat in the old apple-tree,
With its o'erhanging golden canopy
Of leaves illuminate with autumnal hues,
And shining with the argent light of dews,
Shall for a season be our place of rest.
Beneath us, like an oriole's pendent nest,
From which the laughing birds have taken wing,
By thee abandoned, hangs thy vacant swing.
Dream-like the waters of the river gleam;
A sailless vessel drops adown the stream,
And like it, to a sea as wide and deep,
Thou driftest gently down the tides of sleep.

O child! O new-born denizen
Of life's great city! on thy head
The glory of the morn is shed,
Like a celestial benison!
Here at the portal thou dost stand,
And with thy little hand
Thou openest the mysterious gate
Into the future's undiscovered land.
I see its valves expand,
As at the touch of Fate!
Into those realms of love and hate,
Into that darkness blank and drear,
By some prophetic feeling taught,
I launch the bold, adventurous thought,
Freighted with hope and fear;
As upon subterranean streams,
In caverns unexplored and dark,
Men sometimes launch a fragile bark,
Laden with flickering fire,
And watch its swift-receding beams,
Until at length they disappear,
And in the distant dark expire.

By what astrology of fear or hope
Dare I to cast thy horoscope!
Like the new moon thy life appears;
A little strip of silver light,
And widening outward into night
The shadowy disk of future years;
And yet upon its outer rim,
A luminous circle, faint and dim,
And scarcely visible to us here,
Rounds and completes the perfect sphere;
A prophecy and intimation,
A pale and feeble adumbration,
Of the great world of light, that lies
Behind all human destinies.

Ah! if thy fate, with anguish fraught,
Should be to wet the dusty soil
With the hot tears and sweat of toil,—
To struggle with imperious thought,
Until the overburdened brain,
Weary with labour, faint with pain,
Like a jarred pendulum, retain
Only its motion, not its power,—
Remember, in that perilous hour,
When most afflicted and oppressed,
From labour there shall come forth rest.

And if a more auspicious fate
On thy advancing steps await,
Still let it ever be thy pride
To linger by the labourer's side;
With words of sympathy or song
To cheer the dreary march along
Of the great army of the poor,
O'er desert sand, o'er dangerous moor.
Nor to thyself the task shall be
Without reward; for thou shalt learn
The wisdom early to discern
True beauty in utility;

As great Pythagoras of yore,
Standing beside the blacksmith's door,
And hearing the hammers, as they smote
The anvils with a different note,
Stole from the varying tones, that hung
Vibrant on every iron tongue,
The secret of the sounding wire,
And formed the seven-chorded lyre.

Enough! I will not play the Seer;
I will no longer strive to ope
The mystic volume, where appear
The herald Hope, forerunning Fear,
And Fear, the pursuivant of Hope.
Thy destiny remains untold;
For, like Acestes' shaft of old,
The swift thought kindles as it flies,
And burns to ashes in the skies.

THE OCCULTATION OF ORION

I saw, as in a dream sublime,
The balance in the hand of Time.
O'er East and West its beam impended;
And day, with all its hours of light,
Was slowly sinking out of sight,
While, opposite, the scale of night
Silently with the stars ascended.

Like the astrologers of eld,
In that bright vision I beheld
Greater and deeper mysteries.
I saw, with its celestial keys,
Its chords of air, its frets of fire,
The Samian's great Æolian lyre,
Rising through all its sevenfold bars,
From earth unto the fixèd stars.

And through the dewy atmosphere,
Not only could I see, but hear,
Its wondrous and harmonious strings,
Its sweet vibration, sphere by sphere,
From Dian's circle light and near,
Onward to vaster and wider rings,
Where, chanting through his beard of snows,
Majestic, mournful, Saturn goes,
And down the sunless realms of space
Reverberates the thunder of his bass.

Beneath the sky's triumphal arch
This music sounded like a march,
And with its chorus seemed to be
Preluding some great tragedy.
Sirius was rising in the east;
And, slow ascending one by one,
The kindling constellations shone.
Begirt with many a blazing star,
Stood the great giant Algebar,
Orion, hunter of the beast!
His sword hung gleaming by his side.
And, on his arm, the lion's hide
Scattered across the midnight air
The golden radiance of its hair.

The moon was pallid, but not faint,
And beautiful as some fair saint,
Serenely moving on her way
In hours of trial and dismay.
As if she heard the voice of God,
Unharmed with naked feet she trod
Upon the hot and burning stars,
As on the glowing coals and bars
That were to prove her strength, and try
Her holiness and her purity.

Thus moving on, with silent pace,
And triumph in her sweet, pale face,
She reached the station of Orion.

Aghast he stood in strange alarm !
And suddenly from its outstretched arm
Down fell the red skin of the lion
Into the river at his feet.
His mighty club no longer beat
The forehead of the bull ; but he
Reeled as of yore beside the sea,
When, blinded by Œnopion,
He sought the blacksmith at his forge,
And, climbing up the mountain gorge,
Fixed his blank eyes upon the sun.

Then, through the silence overhead,
An angel with a trumpet said,
" For evermore, for evermore,
The reign of violence is o'er !"
And like an instrument that flings
Its music on another's strings,
The trumpet of the angel cast
Upon the heavenly lyre its blast,
And on from sphere to sphere the words
Re-echoed down the burning chords,—
" For evermore, for evermore,
The reign of violence is o'er !"

RAIN IN SUMMER

How beautiful is the rain !
After the dust and heat,
In the broad and fiery street,
In the narrow lane,
How beautiful is the rain !

How it clatters along the roofs,
Like the tramp of hoofs !
How it gushes and struggles out
From the throat of the overflowing spout !

Across the window pane
It pours and pours ;
And swift and wide,
With a muddy tide,
Like a river down the gutter roars
The rain, the welcome rain !

The sick man from his chamber looks
At the twisted brooks ;
He can feel the cool
Breath of each little pool ;
His fevered brain
Grows calm again,
And he breathes a blessing on the rain.

From the neighbouring school
Come the boys,
With more than their wonted noise
And commotion ;
And down the wet streets
Sail their mimic fleets,
Till the treacherous pool
Engulfs them in its whirling
And turbulent ocean.

In the country, on every side
Where far and wide,
Like a leopard's tawny and spotted hide,
Stretches the plain,
To the dry grass and the drier grain
How welcome is the rain !

In the furrowed land
The toilsome and patient oxen stand ;
Lifting the yoke-encumbered head,
With their dilated nostrils spread,
They silently inhale
The clover-scented gale,

And the vapours that arise
From the well-watered and smoking soil.
For this rest in the furrow after toil
Their large and lustrous eyes
Seem to thank the Lord,
More than man's spoken word.

Near at hand,
From under the sheltering trees,
The farmer sees
His pastures, and his fields of grain,
As they bend their tops
To the numberless beating drops
Of the incessant rain.
He counts it as no sin
That he sees therein
Only his own thrift and gain.

These, and far more than these,
The Poet sees !
He can behold
Aquarius old
Walking the fenceless fields of air,
And from each ample fold
Of the clouds about him rolled
Scattering everywhere
The showery rain,
As the farmer scatters his grain.

He can behold
Things manifold
That have not yet been wholly told,
Have not been wholly sung or said.
For his thought, that never stops,
Follows the water-drops
Down to the graves of the dead,
Down through chasms and gulfs profound,
To the dreary fountain-head
Of lakes and rivers underground ;

And sees them, when the rain is done,
On the bridge of colours seven
Climbing up once more to heaven,
Opposite the setting sun.

Thus the Seer,
With vision clear,
Sees forms appear and disappear,
In the perpetual round of strange,
Mysterious change
From birth to death, from death to birth,
From earth to heaven, from heaven to earth;
Till glimpses more sublime
Of things, unseen before,
Unto his wondering eyes reveal
The Universe, as an immeasurable wheel
Turning for evermore
In the rapid and rushing river of Time.

THE BRIDGE

I stood on the bridge at midnight,
As the clocks were striking the hour,
And the moon rose o'er the city,
Behind the dark church-tower.

I saw her bright reflection
In the waters under me,
Like a golden goblet falling
And sinking into the sea.

And far in the hazy distance
Of that lovely night in June,
The blaze of the flaming furnace
Gleamed redder than the moon.

Among the long, black rafters
The wavering shadows lay,
And the current that came from the ocean
Seemed to lift and bear them away;

As, sweeping and eddying through them,
Rose the belated tide,
And, streaming into the moonlight,
The sea-weed floated wide.

And like those waters rushing
Among the wooden piers,
A flood of thoughts came o'er me
That filled my eyes with tears.

How often, oh, how often,
In the days that had gone by,
I had stood on that bridge at midnight,
And gazed on that wave and sky!

How often, oh, how often,
I had wished that the ebbing tide
Would bear me away on its bosom
O'er the ocean wild and wide!

For my heart was hot and restless,
And my life was full of care,
And the burden laid upon me
Seemed greater than I could bear.

But now it has fallen from me,
It is buried in the sea;
And only the sorrow of others
Throws its shadow over me.

Yet whenever I cross the river,
On its bridge with wooden piers,
Like the odour of brine from the ocean
Comes the thought of other years.

And I think how many thousands
Of care-encumbered men,
Each bearing his burden of sorrow,
Have crossed the bridge since then!

I see the long procession
Still passing to and fro,
The young heart hot and restless,
And the old subdued and slow.

And for ever and for ever,
As long as the river flows,
As long as the heart has passions,
As long as life has woes;

The moon and its broken reflection
And its shadows shall appear,
As the symbol of love in heaven,
And its wavering image here.

EXCELSIOR

The shades of night were falling fast,
As through an Alpine village passed
A youth, who bore, 'mid snow and ice,
A banner, with the strange device,
Excelsior!

His brow was sad; his eye beneath
Flashed like a falchion from its sheath,
And like a silver clarion rung
The accents of that unknown tongue,
Excelsior!

In happy homes he saw the light
Of household fires gleam warm and bright;
Above, the spectral glaciers shone,
And from his lips escaped a groan,
Excelsior!

"Try not the Pass!" the old man said;
"Dark lowers the tempest overhead,
The roaring torrent is deep and wide!"
And loud that clarion voice replied,
Excelsior!

"O stay," the maiden said, "and rest
Thy weary head upon this breast!"
A tear stood in his bright blue eye,
But still he answered, with a sigh,
Excelsior!

"Beware the pine-tree's withered branch!
Beware the awful avalanche!"
This was the peasant's last Good-night,
A voice replied, far up the height,
Excelsior!

At break of day, as heavenward
The pious monks of Saint Bernard
Uttered the oft-repeated prayer,
A voice cried through the startled air,
Excelsior!

A traveller, by the faithful hound,
Half-buried in the snow was found,
Still grasping in his hand of ice
That banner with the strange device,
Excelsior!

There in the twilight cold and grey,
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay,
And from the sky, serene and far,
A voice fell, like a falling star,
Excelsior!

TO THE DRIVING CLOUD

Gloomy and dark art thou, O chief of the mighty Omahas;
Gloomy and dark, as the driving cloud, whose name thou hast taken!
Wrapt in thy scarlet blanket, I see thee stalk through the city's
Narrow and populous streets, as once by the margin of rivers
Stalked those birds unknown, that have left us only their footprints.
What, in a few short years, will remain of thy race but the footprints?

How canst thou walk these streets, who hast trod the green turf of the prairies?
How canst thou breathe this air, who hast breathed the sweet air of the mountains?
Ah! 'tis in vain that with lordly looks of disdain thou dost challenge
Looks of disdain in return, and question these walls and these pavements,
Claiming the soil for thy hunting-grounds, while down-trodden millions
Starve in the garrets of Europe, and cry from its caverns that they, too,
Have been created heirs of the earth, and claim its division!

Back, then, back to thy woods in the regions west of the Wabash!
There as a monarch thou reignest. In autumn the leaves of the maple
Pave the floors of thy palace-halls with gold, and in summer
Pine-trees waft through its chambers the odorous breath of their branches.

There thou art strong and great, a hero, a tamer
of horses!
There thou chasest the stately stag on the banks
of the Elk-horn,
Or by the roar of the Running-Water, or where
the Omawhaw
Calls thee, and leaps through the wild ravine like
a brave of the Blackfeet!

Hark! what murmurs arise from the heart of those
mountainous deserts?
Is it the cry of the Foxes and Crows, or the mighty
Behemoth,
Who, unharmed, on his tusks once caught the
bolts of the thunder,
And now lurks in his lair to destroy the race of
the red man?
Far more fatal to thee and thy race than the
Crows and the Foxes,
Far more fatal to thee and thy race than the
tread of Behemoth,
Lo! the big thunder-canoe, that steadily breasts
the Missouri's
Merciless current! and yonder, afar on the
prairies, the camp-fires
Gleam through the night; and the cloud of dust
in the grey of the daybreak
Marks not the buffalo's track, nor the Mandan's
dexterous horse-race;
It is a caravan, whitening the desert where dwells
the Camanches!
Ha! how the breath of these Saxons and Celts,
like the blast of the east-wind,
Drifts evermore to the west the scanty smokes
of thy wigwams!

CURFEW

I

Solemnly, mournfully,
Dealing its dole,
The Curfew Bell
Is beginning to toll.

Cover the embers,
And put out the light;
Toil comes with the morning,
And rest with the night.

Dark grow the windows,
And quenched is the fire,
Sound fades into silence,—
All footsteps retire.

No voice in the chambers,
No sound in the hall!
Sleep and oblivion
Reign over all.

II

The book is completed,
And closed, like the day;
And the hand that has written it
Lays it away.

Dim grow its fancies,
Forgotten they lie;
Like coals in the ashes,
They darken and die.

Song sinks into silence,
The story is told,
The windows are darkened,
The hearth-stone is cold.

Darker and darker
The black shadows fall;
Sleep and oblivion
Reign over all.

SONGS

TO AN OLD DANISH SONG-BOOK

Welcome, my old friend,
Welcome to a foreign fireside,
While the sullen gales of autumn
Shake the windows.

The ungrateful world
Has, it seems, dealt harshly with thee,
Since, beneath the skies of Denmark,
First I met thee.

There are marks of age,
There are thumb-marks on thy margin,
Made by hands that clasped thee rudely
At the alehouse.

Soiled and dull thou art;
Yellow are thy time-worn pages,
As the russet, rain-molested
Leaves of autumn.

Thou art stained with wine
Scattered from hilarious goblets,
As the leaves with the libations
Of Olympus.

Yet dost thou recall
Days departed, half-forgotten,
When in dreamy youth I wandered
By the Baltic,—

When I paused to hear
The old ballad of King Christian
Shouted from suburban taverns
In the twilight.

Thou recallest bards,
Who, in solitary chambers,
And with hearts by passion wasted,
Wrote thy pages.

Thou recallest homes
Where thy songs of love and friendship
Made the gloomy Northern winter
Bright as summer.

Once some ancient Scald,
In his bleak, ancestral Iceland,
Chanted staves of these old ballads
To the Vikings.

Once in Elsinore,
At the court of old King Hamlet,
Yorick and his boon companions
Sang these ditties.

Once Prince Frederick's Guard
Sang them in their smoky barracks ;—
Suddenly the English cannon
Joined the chorus !

Peasants in the field,
Sailors on the roaring ocean,
Students, tradesmen, pale mechanics,
All have sung them.

Thou hast been their friend ;
They, alas, have left thee friendless ;
Yet at least by one warm fireside
Art thou welcome.

And, as swallows build
In these wide, old-fashioned chimneys,
So thy twittering songs shall nestle
In my bosom,—

Quiet, close, and warm,
Sheltered from all molestation,
And recalling by their voices
Youth and travel.

THE ARROW AND THE SONG

I SHOT an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.

WALTER VON DER VOGELWEID[1]

VOGELWEID the Minnesinger,
When he left this world of ours,
Laid his body in the cloister,
Under Würtzburg's minster towers.

[1] Walter von der Vogelweid, or Bird-meadow, was one of the principal Minnesingers of the thirteenth century. He triumphed over Heinrich von Ofterdingen in that poetic contest at Wartburg Castle, known in literary history as the "War of Wartburg."

And he gave the monks his treasures,
Gave them all with this behest:
They should feed the birds at noontide
Daily on his place of rest;

Saying, "From these wandering minstrels
I have learned the art of song;
Let me now repay the lessons
They have taught so well and long."

Thus the bard of love departed;
And, fulfilling his desire,
On his tomb the birds were feasted
By the children of the choir.

Day by day, o'er tower and turret,
In foul weather and in fair,
Day by day, in vaster numbers,
Flocked the poets of the air.

On the tree whose heavy branches
Overshadowed all the place,
On the pavement, on the tombstone,
On the poet's sculptured face,

On the cross-bars of each window,
On the lintel of each door,
They renewed the War of Wartburg,
Which the bard had fought before.

There they sang their merry carols,
Sang their lauds on every side;
And the name their voices uttered
Was the name of Vogelweid.

Till at length the portly abbot
Murmured, "Why this waste of food?
Be it changed to loaves henceforward
For our fasting brotherhood."

Then in vain, o'er tower and turret,
From the walls and woodland nests,
When the minster bell rang noontide,
Gathered the unwelcome guests.

Then in vain, with cries discordant,
Clamorous round the Gothic spire,
Screamed the feathered Minnesingers
For the children of the choir.

Time has long effaced the inscriptions
On the cloister's funeral stones,
And tradition only tells us
Where repose the poet's bones.

But around the vast cathedral,
By sweet echoes multiplied,
Still the birds repeat the legend,
And the name of Vogelweid.

THE DAY IS DONE

The day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of Night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village
Gleam through the rain and the mist,
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me,
That my soul cannot resist:

A feeling of sadness and longing,
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

Come, read to me some poem,
Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,
Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
Through the corridors of Time.

For, like strains of martial music,
Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavour;
And to-night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,
Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start;

Who, through long days of labour,
And nights devoid of ease,
Still heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume
The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away.

SEA-WEED

When descends on the Atlantic
The gigantic
Storm-wind of the equinox,
Landward in his wrath he scourges
The toiling surges,
Laden with sea-weed from the rocks:

From Bermuda's reefs; from edges
Of sunken ledges,
In some far-off, bright Azore;
From Bahama, and the dashing,
Silver-flashing
Surges of San Salvador;

From the tumbling surf, that buries
The Orkneyan skerries,
Answering the hoarse Hebrides;
And from wrecks of ships, and drifting
Spars, uplifting
On the desolate, rainy seas;—

Ever drifting, drifting, drifting
On the shifting
Currents of the restless main;
Till in sheltered coves, and reaches
Of sandy beaches,
All have found repose again.

So when storms of wild emotion
Strike the ocean
Of the poet's soul, ere long
From each cave and rocky fastness,
In its vastness,
Floats some fragment of a song:

From the far-off isles enchanted,
Heaven has planted
With the golden fruit of Truth;
From the flashing surf, whose vision
Gleams Elysian
In the tropic clime of Youth;

From the strong Will and the Endeavour
That for ever
Wrestle with the tides of Fate;
From the wreck of Hopes far scattered,
Tempest-shattered,
Floating waste and desolate;—

Ever drifting, drifting, drifting
On the shifting
Currents of the restless heart;
Till at length in books recorded,
They, like hoarded
Household words, no more depart.

DRINKING SONG

INSCRIPTION FOR AN ANTIQUE PITCHER

Come, old friend! sit down and listen!
From the pitcher placed between us,
How the waters laugh and glisten
In the head of old Silenus!

Old Silenus, bloated, drunken,
Led by his inebriate Satyrs;
On his breast his head is sunken,
Vacantly he leers and chatters.

Fauns with youthful Bacchus follow;
Ivy crowns that brow supernal
As the forehead of Apollo,
And possessing youth eternal.

Round about him, fair Bacchantes,
Bearing cymbals, flutes, and thyrses,
Wild from Naxian groves, or Zante's
Vineyards, sing delirious verses.

Thus he won, through all the nations,
Bloodless victories, and the farmer
Bore, as trophies and oblations,
Vines for banners, ploughs for armour.

Judged by no o'er-zealous rigour,
Much this mystic throng expresses:
Bacchus was the type of vigour,
And Silenus of excesses.

These are ancient ethnic revels,
Of a faith long since forsaken;
Now the Satyrs, changed to devils,
Frighten mortals wine-o'ertaken.

Now to rivulets from the mountains
Point the rods of fortune-tellers;
Youth perpetual dwells in fountains,—
Not in flasks, and casks and cellars.

Claudius, though he sang of flagons
And huge tankards filled with Rhenish,
From that fiery blood of dragons
Never would his own replenish.

Even Redi, though he chanted
Bacchus in the Tuscan valleys,
Never drank the wine he vaunted
In his dithyrambic sallies.

Then with water fill the pitcher
Wreathed about with classic fables;
Ne'er Falernian threw a richer
Light upon Lucullus' tables.

Come, old friend, sit down and listen!
As it passes thus between us,
How its wavelets laugh and glisten
In the head of old Silenus!

THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS

[L'éternité est une pendule, dont le balancier dit et redit sans cesse ces deux mots seulement, dans le silence des tombeaux: "Toujours! jamais! Jamais! toujours!"—JACQUES BRIDAINE.]

SOMEWHAT back from the village street
Stands the old-fashioned country-seat;
Across its antique portico
Tall poplar trees their shadows throw,
And from its station in the hall
An ancient timepiece says to all,
"For ever—never!
Never—for ever!"

Halfway up the stairs it stands,
And points and beckons with its hands
From its case of massive oak,
Like a monk, who, under his cloak,
Crosses himself, and sighs, alas!
With sorrowful voice to all who pass,—
"For ever—never!
Never—for ever!"

By day its voice is low and light;
But in the silent dead of night,
Distinct as a passing footstep's fall,
It echoes along the vacant hall,
Along the ceiling, along the floor,
And seems to say at each chamber-door,—
"For ever—never!
Never—for ever!"

Through days of sorrow and of mirth,
Through days of death and days of birth,
Through every swift vicissitude
Of changeful time, unchanged it has stood,
And as if, like God, it all things saw,
It calmly repeats those words of awe,—
"For ever—never!
Never—for ever!"

In that mansion used to be
Free-hearted Hospitality;
His great fires up the chimney roared;
The stranger feasted at his board;
But, like the skeleton at the feast,
That warning timepiece never ceased,—
"For ever—never!
Never—for ever!"

There groups of merry children played,
There youths and maidens dreaming strayed;
O precious hours! O golden prime,
And affluence of love and time!
Even as a miser counts his gold,
Those hours the ancient timepiece told,—
"For ever—never!
Never—for ever!"

From that chamber, clothed in white,
The bride came forth on her wedding night:
There, in that silent room below,
The dead lay in his shroud of snow;
And in the hush that followed the prayer,
Was heard the old clock on the stair,—
"For ever—never!
Never—for ever!"

All are scattered now and fled,
Some are married, some are dead;
And when I ask, with throbs of pain,
"Ah! when shall they all meet again?"

As in the days long since gone by,
The ancient timepiece makes reply,—
"For ever—never!
Never—for ever!"

Never here, for ever there,
Where all parting, pain, and care,
And death and time shall disappear,—
For ever there, but never here!
The horologe of Eternity
Sayeth this incessantly,—
"For ever—never!
Never—for ever!"

AFTERNOON IN FEBRUARY

The day is ending,
The night is descending;
The marsh is frozen,
The river dead.

Through clouds like ashes
The red sun flashes
On village windows
That glimmer red.

The snow recommences;
The buried fences
Mark no longer
The road o'er the plain;

While through the meadows,
Like fearful shadows,
Slowly passes
A funeral train.

The bell is pealing,
And every feeling
Within me responds
To the dismal knell;

Shadows are trailing,
My heart is bewailing
And tolling within
Like a funeral bell.

THE SPANISH STUDENT

1843

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

VICTORIAN, HYPOLITO	*Students of Alcalá.*
THE COUNT OF LARA, DON CARLOS	*Gentlemen of Madrid.*
THE ARCHBISHOP OF TOLEDO.	
A CARDINAL.	
BELTRAN CRUZADO	*Count of the Gipsies.*
BARTOLOMÉ ROMAN	*A young Gipsy.*
THE PADRE CURA OF GUADARRAMA.	
PEDRO CRESPO	*Alcalde.*
PANCHO	*Alguacil.*
FRANCISCO	*Lara's Servant.*
CHISPA	*Victorian's Servant.*
BALTASAR	*Innkeeper.*
PRECIOSA	*A Gipsy Girl.*
ANGELICA	*A poor Girl.*
MARTINA	*The Padre Cura's Niece.*
DOLORES	*Preciosa's Maid.*

Gipsies, Musicians, &c.

ACT I

SCENE I.—*The* COUNT OF LARA'S *Chambers. Night. The* COUNT *in his dressing-gown, smoking and conversing with* DON CARLOS.

Lara. You were not at the play to-night, Don Carlos;
How happened it?

Carlos. I had engagements elsewhere.

Lara. Pray who was there?

Carlos. Why, all the town and court.
The house was crowded; and the busy fans
Among the gaily dressed and perfumed ladies

Fluttered like butterflies among the flowers.
There was the Countess of Medina Celi;
The Goblin Lady with her Phantom Lover,
Her Lindo Don Diego; Doña Sol,
And Doña Serafina, and her cousins.

Carlos. What was the play?

Lara. It was a dull affair;
One of those comedies in which you see,
As Lope says, the history of the world
Brought down from Genesis to the Day of Judgment.
There were three duels fought in the first act,
Three gentlemen receiving deadly wounds,
Laying their hands upon their hearts, and saying,
"O, I am dead!" a lover in a closet,
An old hidalgo, and a gay Don Juan,
A Doña Inez with a black mantilla,
Followed at twilight by an unknown lover,
Who looks intently where he knows she is not!

Carlos. Of course, the Preciosa danced to-night?

Lara. And never better. Every footstep fell
As lightly as a sunbeam on the water.
I think the girl extremely beautiful.

Carlos. Almost beyond the privilege of woman!
I saw her in the Prado yesterday.
Her step was royal—queen-like—and her face
As beautiful as a saint's in Paradise.

Lara. May not a saint fall from her Paradise,
And be no more a saint?

Carlos. Why do you ask?

Lara. Because I have heard it said this angel fell,
And, though she is a virgin outwardly,
Within she is a sinner; like those panels
Of doors and altar-pieces the old monks
Painted in convents, with the Virgin Mary
On the outside, and on the inside Venus!

Carlos. You do her wrong; indeed, you do her wrong!
She is as virtuous as she is fair.

Lara. How credulous you are! Why, look you, friend,

There's not a virtuous woman in Madrid,
In this whole city! And would you persuade me
That a mere dancing-girl, who shows herself
Nightly, half-naked, on the stage, for money,
And with voluptuous motions fires the blood
Of inconsiderate youth, is to be held
A model for her virtue.

Carlos. You forget
She is a Gipsy girl.

Lara. And therefore won
The easier.

Carlos. Nay, not to be won at all!
The only virtue that a Gipsy prizes
Is chastity. This is her only virtue.
Dearer than life she holds it. I remember
A Gipsy woman, a vile, shameless bawd,
Whose craft was to betray the young and fair;
And yet this woman was above all bribes.
And when a noble lord, touched by her beauty,
The wild and wizard beauty of her race,
Offered her gold to be what she made others,
She turned upon him, with a look of scorn,
And smote him in the face!

Lara. And does that prove
That Preciosa is above suspicion?

Carlos. It proves a nobleman may be repulsed
When he thinks conquest easy. I believe
That woman, in her deepest degradation,
Holds something sacred, something undefiled,
Some pledge and keepsake of her higher nature,
And, like the diamond in the dark, retains
Some quenchless gleam of the celestial light!

Lara. Yet Preciosa would have taken the gold.

Carlos [*rising*]. I do not think so.

Lara. I am sure of it.
But why this haste? Stay yet a little longer,
And fight the battles of your Dulcinea.

Carlos. 'Tis late. I must begone, for if I stay
You will not be persuaded.

Lara. Yes; persuade me.

Carlos. No one so deaf as he who will not hear!
Lara. No one so blind as he who will not see!
Carlos. And so good night. I wish you pleasant dreams,
And greater faith in woman. [*Exit.*
Lara. Greater faith!
I have the greatest faith; for I believe
Victorian is her lover. I believe
That I shall be to-morrow; and thereafter
Another, and another, and another,
Chasing each other through her zodiac,
As Taurus chases Aries.

[*Enter* Francisco *with a casket.*]

Well, Francisco,
What speed with Preciosa?
Fran. None, my lord.
She sends your jewels back, and bids me tell you
She is not to be purchased by your gold.
Lara. Then I will try some other way to win her.
Pray, dost thou know Victorian?
Fran. Yes, my lord,
I saw him at the jeweller's to-day.
Lara. What was he doing there?
Fran. I saw him buy
A golden ring that had a ruby in it.
Lara. Was there another like it?
Fran. One so like it
I could not choose between them.
Lara. It is well.
To-morrow morning bring that ring to me.
Do not forget. Now light me to my bed. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*A Street in Madrid. Enter* Chispa, *followed by musicians, with a bagpipe, guitars, and other instruments.*

Chis. Abernuncio Satanas! and a plague on all lovers who ramble about at night, drinking the elements, instead of sleeping quietly in their beds.

Every dead man to his cemetery, say I; and every friar to his monastery. Now, here's my master, Victorian, yesterday a cowkeeper, and to-day a gentleman; yesterday a student, and to-day a lover; and I must be up later than the nightingale, for as the abbot sings so must the sacristan respond. God grant he may soon be married, for then shall all this serenading cease. Ay, marry! marry! marry! Mother, what does marry mean? It means to spin, to bear children, and to weep, my daughter! And, of a truth, there is something more in matrimony than the wedding-ring. [*To the musicians.*] And now, gentlemen, Pax vobiscum! as the ass said to the cabbages. Pray, walk this way; and don't hang down your heads. It is no disgrace to have an old father and a ragged shirt. Now, look you, you are gentlemen who lead the life of crickets; you enjoy hunger by day and noise by night. Yet, I beseech you, for this once be not loud, but pathetic; for it is a serenade to a damsel in bed, and not to the Man in the Moon. Your object is not to arouse and terrify, but to soothe and bring lulling dreams. Therefore, each shall not play upon his instrument as if it were the only one in the universe, but gently, and with a certain modesty, according with the others. Pray, how may I call thy name, friend?

First Mus. Gerónimo Gil, at your service.

Chis. Every tub smells of the wine that is in it. Pray, Gerónimo, is not Saturday an unpleasant day with thee?

First Mus. Why so?

Chis. Because I have heard it said that Saturday is an unpleasant day with those who have but one shirt. Moreover, I have seen thee at the tavern, and if thou canst run as fast as thou canst drink, I should like to hunt hares with thee. What instrument is that?

First Mus. An Aragonese bagpipe.

Chis. Pray, art thou related to the bagpiper of

Bujalance, who asked a maravedi for playing, and ten for leaving off?

First Mus. No, your honour.

Chis. I am glad of it. What other instruments have we?

Second and Third Mus. We play the bandurria.

Chis. A pleasing instrument. And thou?

Fourth Mus. The fife.

Chis. I like it; it has a cheerful, soul-stirring sound, that soars up to my lady's window like the song of a swallow. And you others?

Other Mus. We are the singers, please your honour.

Chis. You are too many. Do you think we are going to sing mass in the cathedral of Córdova? Four men can make but little use of one shoe, and I see not how you can all sing in one song. But follow me along the garden wall. That is the way my master climbs to the lady's window. It is by the Vicar's skirts that the devil climbs into the belfry. Come, follow me, and make no noise.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—PRECIOSA'S *Chamber.* *She stands at the open window.*

Pre. How slowly through the lilac-scented air
Descends the tranquil moon! Like thistle-down
The vapoury clouds float in the peaceful sky;
And sweetly from yon hollow vaults of shade
The nightingales breathe out their souls in song.
And hark! what songs of love, what soul-like sounds,
Answer them from below!

SERENADE

Stars of the summer night!
Far in yon azure deeps,
Hide, hide your golden light!
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

Moon of the summer night!
Far down yon western steeps,
Sink, sink in silver light!
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

Wind of the summer night!
Where yonder woodbine creeps,
Fold, fold thy pinions light!
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

Dreams of the summer night!
Tell her, her lover keeps
Watch! while in slumbers light
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

[*Enter* VICTORIAN *by the balcony.*]

Vict. Poor little dove! Thou tremblest like a leaf!

Pre. I am so frightened! 'Tis for thee I tremble!
I hate to have thee climb that wall by night!
Did no one see thee?

Vict. None, my love, but thou.

Pre. 'Tis very dangerous; and when thou art gone,
I chide myself for letting thee come here
Thus stealthily by night. Where hast thou been?
Since yesterday I have no news from thee.

Vict. Since yesterday I've been in Alcalá.
Ere long the time will come, sweet Preciosa,
When that dull distance shall no more divide us,
And I no more shall scale thy wall by night
To steal a kiss from thee, as I do now.

Pre. An honest thief to steal but what thou givest.

Vict. And we shall sit together unmolested,

And words of true love pass from tongue to tongue,
As singing birds from one bough to another.
Pre. That were a life indeed to make time envious!
I knew that thou wouldst visit me to-night.
I saw thee at the play.
Vict. Sweet child of air!
Never did I behold thee so attired
And garmented in beauty as to-night!
What hast thou done to make thee look so fair?
Pre. Am not I always fair?
Vict. Ay, and so fair
That I am jealous of all eyes that see thee,
And wish that they were blind.
Pre. I heed them not;
When thou art present, I see none but thee!
Vict. There's nothing fair nor beautiful, but takes
Something from thee, that makes it beautiful.
Pre. And yet thou leavest me for those dusty books.
Vict. Thou comest between me and those books too often!
I see thy face in everything I see!
The paintings in the chapel wear thy looks,
The canticles are changed to sarabands,
And with the learned doctors of the schools
I see thee dance cachuchas.
Pre. In good sooth,
I dance with learned doctors of the schools
To-morrow morning.
Vict. And with whom, I pray?
Pre. A grave and reverend Cardinal, and his Grace
The Archbishop of Toledo.
Vict. What mad jest
Is this?
Pre. It is no jest; indeed it is not.
Vict. Prithee, explain thyself.
Pre. Why, simply thus.
Thou knowest the Pope has sent here into Spain
To put a stop to dances on the stage.

Vict. I have heard it whispered.
Pre. Now the Cardinal
Who for this purpose comes, would fain behold
With his own eyes these dances ; and the Archbishop
Has sent for me——
Vict. That thou mayst dance before them !
Now viva la cachucha ! It will breathe
The fire of youth into these grey old men !
'Twill be thy proudest conquest !
Pre. Saving one.
And yet I fear these dances will be stopped,
And Preciosa be once more a beggar.
Vict. The sweetest beggar that e'er asked for alms;
With such beseeching eyes, that when I saw thee
I gave my heart away !
Pre. Dost thou remember
When first we met ?
Vict. It was at Córdova,
In the cathedral garden. Thou wast sitting
Under the orange-trees, beside a fountain.
Pre. 'Twas Easter-Sunday. The full blossomed trees
Filled all the air with fragrance and with joy.
The priests were singing, and the organ sounded,
And then anon the great cathedral bell.
It was the elevation of the Host.
We both of us fell down upon our knees,
Under the orange boughs, and prayed together.
I never had been happy till that moment.
Vict. Thou blessed angel !
Pre. And when thou wast gone
I felt an aching here. I did not speak
To any one that day. But from that day
Bartolomé grew hateful unto me.
Vict. Remember him no more. Let not his shadow
Come between thee and me. Sweet Preciosa !
I loved thee even then, though I was silent !
Pre. I thought I ne'er should see thy face again.
Thy farewell had a sound of sorrow in it.

Vict. That was the first sound in the song of love!
Scarce more than silence is, and yet a sound.
Hands of invisible spirits touch the strings
Of that mysterious instrument, the soul,
And play the prelude of our fate. We hear
The voice prophetic, and are not alone.

Pre. That is my faith. Dost thou believe these warnings?

Vict. So far as this. Our feelings and our thoughts
Tend ever on, and rest not in the Present.
As drops of rain fall into some dark well,
And from below comes a scarce audible sound,
So fall our thoughts into the dark Hereafter,
And their mysterious echo reaches us.

Pre. I have felt it so, but found no words to say it!
I cannot reason; I can only feel!
But thou hast language for all thoughts and feelings.
Thou art a scholar; and sometimes I think
We cannot walk together in this world!
The distance that divides us is too great!
Henceforth thy pathway lies among the stars;
I must not hold thee back.

Vict. Thou little sceptic!
Dost thou still doubt? What I most prize in woman
Is her affections, not her intellect!
The intellect is finite; but the affections
Are infinite, and cannot be exhausted.
Compare me with the great men of the earth;
What am I? Why, a pigmy among giants!
But if thou lovest,—mark me! I say lovest,
The greatest of thy sex excels thee not!
The world of the affections is thy world,
Not that of man's ambition. In that stillness
Which most becomes a woman, calm and holy,
Thou sittest by the fireside of the heart,
Feeding its flame. The element of fire
Is pure. It cannot change nor hide its nature,
But burns as brightly in a Gipsy camp
As in a palace hall. Art thou convinced?

Pre. Yes, that I love thee, as the good love heaven;
But not that I am worthy of that heaven.
How shall I more deserve it?
Vict. Loving more.
Pre. I cannot love thee more; my heart is full.
Vict. Then let it overflow, and I will drink it,
As in the summer time the thirsty sands
Drink the swift waters of the Manzanares,
And still do thirst for more.
A Watchman [*in the street*]. Ave Maria
Purissima! 'Tis midnight and serene!
Vict. Hear'st thou that cry?
Pre. It is a hateful sound,
To scare thee from me!
Vict. As the hunter's horn
Doth scare the timid stag, or bark of hounds
The moor-fowl from his mate.
Pre. Pray, do not go!
Vict. I must away to Alcalá to-night.
Think of me when I am away.
Pre. Fear not!
I have no thoughts that do not think of thee.
Vict [*giving her a ring*]. And to remind thee of my love, take this;
A serpent, emblem of Eternity;
A ruby,—say, a drop of my heart's blood.
Pre. It is an ancient saying, that the ruby
Brings gladness to the wearer, and preserves
The heart pure, and, if laid beneath the pillow,
Drives away evil dreams. But then, alas!
It was a serpent tempted Eve to sin.
Vict. What convent of barefooted Carmelites
Taught thee so much theology?
Pre. [*laying her hand upon his mouth*]. Hush! Hush!
Good night! and may all holy angels guard thee!
Vict. Good night! good night! Thou art my guardian angel!
I have no other saint than thou to pray to!
[*He descends by the balcony.*]

Pre. Take care, and do not hurt thee. Art thou safe?

Vict. [*from the garden*]. Safe as my love for thee! But art thou safe?

Others can climb a balcony by moonlight
As well as I. Pray shut thy window close;
I am jealous of the perfumed air of night
That from this garden climbs to kiss thy lips.

Pre. [*throwing down her handkerchief*]. Thou silly child; take this to bind thine eyes.

It is my benison!

Vict. And brings to me
Sweet fragrance from thy lips, as the soft wind
Wafts to the out-bound mariner the breath
Of the belovèd land he leaves behind.

Pre. Make not thy voyage long.

Vict. To-morrow night
Shall see me safe returned. Thou art the star
To guide me to an anchorage. Good night!
My beauteous star! My star of love, good night!

Pre. Good night!

Watchman [*at a distance*]. Ave Maria Purissima!

SCENE IV.—*An inn on the road to Alcalá.* BALTASAR *asleep on a bench.* *Enter* CHISPA.

Chis. And here we are, half-way to Alcalá, between cocks and midnight. Body of me! what an inn this is! The lights out, and the landlord asleep. Holá! ancient Baltasar!

Balt. [*waking*]. Here I am.

Chis. Yes, there you are, like a one-eyed Alcalde in a town without inhabitants. Bring a light, and let me have supper.

Balt. Where is your master?

Chis. Do not trouble yourself about him. We have stopped a moment to breathe our horses; and, if he chooses to walk up and down in the open air, looking into the sky as one who hears it rain, that does not satisfy my hunger, you know. But be

quick, for I am in a hurry, and every man stretches his legs according to the length of his coverlet. What have we here?

Balt. [*setting a light on the table*]. Stewed rabbit.

Chis. [*eating*]. Conscience of Portalegre! Stewed kitten, you mean!

Balt. And a pitcher of Pedro Ximenes, with a roasted pear in it.

Chis. [*drinking*]. Ancient Baltasar, amigo! You know how to cry wine and sell vinegar. I tell you this is nothing but Vino Tinto of La Mancha, with a tang of the swine-skin.

Balt. I swear to you by Saint Simon and Judas, it is all as I say.

Chis. And I swear to you by Saint Peter and Saint Paul, that it is no such thing. Moreover, your supper is like the hidalgo's dinner, very little meat, and a great deal of table-cloth.

Balt. Ha! ha! ha!

Chis. And more noise than nuts.

Balt. Ha! ha! ha! You must have your joke, Master Chispa. But shall I not ask Don Victorian in, to take a draught of the Pedro Ximenes?

Chis. No; you might as well say, "Dont-you-want-some?" to a dead man.

Balt. Why does he go so often to Madrid?

Chis. For the same reason that he eats no supper. He is in love. Were you ever in love, Baltasar?

Balt. I was never out of it, good Chispa. It has been the torment of my life.

Chis. What! are you on fire, too, old haystack? Why, we shall never be able to put you out.

Vict. [*without*]. Chispa!

Chis. Go to bed, Pero Grullo, for the cocks are crowing.

Vict. Ea! Chispa! Chispa!

Chis. Ea! Señor. Come with me, ancient Baltasar, and bring water for the horses. I will pay for the supper, to-morrow. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—VICTORIAN'S *Chambers at Alcalá.* HYPOLITO *asleep in an arm-chair. He awakes slowly.*

Hyp. I must have been asleep! ay, sound asleep!
And it was all a dream. O sleep, sweet sleep!
Whatever form thou takest, thou art fair,
Holding unto our lips thy goblet filled
Out of Oblivion's well, a healing draught!
The candles have burned low; it must be late.
Where can Victorian be? Like Fray Carillo,[1]
The only place in which one cannot find him
Is his own cell. Here's his guitar, that seldom
Feels the caresses of its master's hand.
Open thy silent lips, sweet instrument!
And make dull midnight merry with a song.

[*He plays and sings.*]

Padre Francisco!
Padre Francisco!
What do you want of Padre Francisco?
Here is a pretty young maiden
Who wants to confess her sins.
Open the door and let her come in,
I will shrive her from every sin.

[*Enter* VICTORIAN.]

Vict. Padre Hypolito! Padre Hypolito!
Hyp. What do you want of Padre Hypolito?
Vict. Come, shrive me straight; for, if love be a sin,
I am the greatest sinner that doth live.
I will confess the sweetest of all crimes,
A maiden wooed and won.
Hyp. The same old tale
Of the old woman in the chimney corner,
Who, while the pot boils, says, "Come here, my child;
I'll tell thee a story of my wedding-day."

[1] The allusion is to a Spanish epigram. See Appendix.

Vict. Nay, listen, for my heart is full; so full
That I must speak.
Hyp. Alas! that heart of thine
Is like a scene in the old play; the curtain
Rises to solemn music, and lo! enter
The eleven thousand virgins of Cologne!
Vict. Nay, like the Sibyl's volumes, thou shouldst say;
Those that remained, after the six were burned,
Being held more precious than the nine together.
But listen to my tale. Dost thou remember
The gipsy girl we saw at Córdova
Dance the Romalis in the market-place?
Hyp. Thou meanest Preciosa?
Vict. Ay, the same.
Thou knowest how her image haunted me
Long after we returned to Alcalá.
She's in Madrid.
Hyp. I know it.
Vict. And I am in love.
Hyp. And therefore in Madrid when thou shouldst be
In Alcalá.
Vict. O pardon me, my friend,
If I so long have kept this secret from thee;
But silence is the charm that guards such treasures,
And, if a word be spoken ere the time,
They sink again, they were not meant for us.
Hyp. Alas! alas! I see thou art in love.
Love keeps the cold out better than a cloak,
It serves for food and raiment. Give a Spaniard
His mass, his olla, and his Doña Luisa,—
Thou knowest the proverb. But pray tell me, lover,
How speeds thy wooing? Is the maiden coy?
Write her a song, beginning with an *Ave;*
Sing as the monk sang to the Virgin Mary,

Ave! cujus calcem clare,
Nec centenni commendare
Sciret Seraph studio.

Vict. Pray, do not jest! This is no time for it.
I am in earnest!
Hyp. Seriously enamoured?
What, ho! The Primus of great Alcalá
Enamoured of a Gipsy! Tell me frankly,
How meanest thou?
Vict. I mean it honestly.
Hyp. Surely thou wilt not marry her!
Vict. Why not?
Hyp. She was betrothed to one Bartolomé,
If I remember rightly, a young Gipsy
Who danced with her at Córdova.
Vict. They quarrelled,
And so the matter ended.
Hyp. But in truth
Thou wilt not marry her?
Vict. In truth I will.
The angels sang in heaven when she was born!
She is a precious jewel I have found
Among the filth and rubbish of the world.
I'll stoop for it; but when I wear it here,
Set on my forehead like the morning star,
The world may wonder, but it will not laugh.
Hyp. If thou wear'st nothing else upon thy forehead,
'Twill be indeed a wonder.
Vict. Out upon thee,
With thy unseasonable jests! Pray, tell me,
Is there no virtue in the world?
Hyp. Not much.
What, think'st thou, is she doing at this moment;
Now, while we speak of her?
Vict. She lies asleep,
And, from her parted lips, her gentle breath
Comes like the fragrance from the lips of flowers.
Her tender limbs are still, and, on her breast,
The cross she prayed to, ere she fell asleep,
Rises and falls with the soft tide of dreams,
Like a light barge safe moored.
Hyp. Which means, in prose,
She's sleeping with her mouth a little open!

Vict. O, would I had the old magician's glass
To see her as she lies in childlike sleep!
Hyp. And wouldst thou venture?
Vict. Ay, indeed I would!
Hyp. Thou art courageous. Hast thou e'er reflected
How much lies hidden in that one word, *now?*
Vict. Yes, all the awful mystery of Life!
I oft have thought, my dear Hypolito,
That could we, by some spell of magic, change
The world and its inhabitants to stone,
In the same attitudes they now are in,
What fearful glances downward might we cast
Into the hollow chasms of human life!
What groups should we behold about the death-bed,
Putting to shame the group of Niobe!
What joyful welcomes, and what sad farewells!
What stony tears in those congealèd eyes!
What visible joy or anguish in those cheeks!
What bridal pomps, and what funereal shows!
What foes, like gladiators, fierce and struggling!
What lovers with their marble lips together!
Hyp. Ay, there it is! and, if I were in love,
That is the very point I most should dread.
This magic glass, these magic spells of thine,
Might tell a tale were better left untold.
For instance, they might show us thy fair cousin,
The Lady Violante, bathed in tears
Of love and anger, like the maid of Colchis,
Whom thou, another faithless Argonaut,
Having won that golden fleece, a woman's love,
Desertest for this Glaucè.
Vict. Hold thy peace!
She cares not for me. She may wed another,
Or go into a convent, and, thus dying,
Marry Achilles in the Elysian Fields.
Hyp. [*rising*]. And so, good night! Good morning, I should say.
[*Clock strikes three.*]
Hark! how the loud and ponderous mace of Time
Knocks at the golden portals of the day!

And so, once more, good night! We'll speak more largely
Of Preciosa when we meet again.
Get thee to bed, and the magician, Sleep,
Shall show her to thee, in his magic glass,
In all her loveliness. Good night! [*Exit.*

Vict. Good night!
But not to bed; for I must read awhile.

[*Throws himself into the arm-chair which* Hypolito *has left, and lays a large book open upon his knees.*]

Must read, or sit in reverie and watch
The changing colour of the waves that break
Upon the idle sea-shore of the mind!
Visions of Fame! that once did visit me,
Making night glorious with your smile, where are ye?
O, who shall give me, now that ye are gone,
Juices of those immortal plants that bloom
Upon Olympus, making us immortal?
Or teach me where that wondrous mandrake grows
Whose magic root, torn from the earth with groans,
At midnight hour, can scare the fiends away,
And make the mind prolific in its fancies?
I have the wish, but want the will, to act!
Souls of great men departed! Ye whose words
Have come to light from the swift river of Time,
Like Roman swords found in the Tagus' bed,
Where is the strength to wield the arms ye bore?
From the barred visor of Antiquity
Reflected shines the eternal light of Truth,
As from a mirror! All the means of action—
The shapeless masses—the materials—
Lie everywhere about us. What we need
Is the celestial fire to change the flint
Into transparent crystal, bright and clear.
That fire is genius! The rude peasant sits
At evening in his smoky cot, and draws
With charcoal uncouth figures on the wall.
The son of genius comes, footsore with travel,
And begs a shelter from the inclement night.

He takes the charcoal from the peasant's hand,
And, by the magic of his touch at once
Transfigured, all its hidden virtues shine,
And, in the eyes of the astonished clown,
It gleams a diamond! Even thus transformed,
Rude popular traditions and old tales
Shine as immortal poems, at the touch
Of some poor, houseless, homeless, wandering bard,
Who had but a night's lodgings for his pains.
But there are brighter dreams than those of Fame,
Which are the dreams of Love! Out of the heart
Rises the bright ideal of these dreams,
As from some woodland fount a spirit rises
And sinks again into its silent deeps,
Ere this enamoured knight can touch her robe!
'Tis this ideal that the soul of man,
Like the enamoured knight beside the fountain,
Waits for upon the margin of Life's stream;
Waits to behold her rise from the dark waters,
Clad in a mortal shape! Alas! how many
Must wait in vain! The stream flows evermore,
But from its silent deeps no spirit rises!
Yet I, born under a propitious star,
Have found the bright ideal of my dreams.
Yes! she is ever with me. I can feel,
Here, as I sit at midnight and alone,
Her gentle breathing! on my breast can feel
The pressure of her head! God's benison
Rest ever on it! Close those beauteous eyes,
Sweet Sleep! and all the flowers that bloom at night
With balmy lips breathe in her ears my name!

[*Gradually sinks asleep.*]

ACT II

SCENE I.—PRECIOSA'S *Chamber. Morning.* PRECIOSA *and* ANGELICA.

Pre. Why will you go so soon? Stay yet awhile.
The poor too often turn away unheard
From hearts that shut against them with a sound

That will be heard in heaven. Pray, tell me more
Of your adversities. Keep nothing from me.
What is your landlord's name?
Ang. The Count of Lara.
Pre. The Count of Lara? O, beware that man!
Mistrust his pity,—hold no parley with him!
And rather die an outcast in the streets
Than touch his gold.
Ang. You know him, then!
Pre. As much
As any woman may, and yet be pure.
As you would keep your name without a blemish,
Beware of him!
Ang. Alas! what can I do?
I cannot choose my friends. Each word of kindness,
Come from whence it may, is welcome to the poor.
Pre. Make me your friend. A girl so young and fair
Should have no friends but those of her own sex.
What is your name?
Ang. Angelica.
Pre. That name
Was given you, that you might be an angel
To her who bore you! When your infant smile
Made her home Paradise, you were her angel.
O, be an angel still! She needs that smile.
So long as you are innocent, fear nothing.
No one can harm you! I am a poor girl,
Whom chance has taken from the public streets.
I have no other shield than mine own virtue,
That is the charm which has protected me!
Amid a thousand perils, I have worn it
Here on my heart! It is my guardian angel.
Ang. [*rising*]. I thank you for this counsel, dearest lady.
Pre. Thank me by following it.
Ang. Indeed I will.
Pre. Pray, do not go. I have much more to say.
Ang. My mother is alone. I dare not leave her.
Pre. Some other time, then, when we meet again.

You must not go away with words alone.
[*Gives her a purse.*]
Take this. Would it were more.
Ang. I thank you, lady.
Pre. No thanks. To-morrow come to me again.
I dance to-night,—perhaps for the last time.
But what I gain, I promise shall be yours,
If that can save you from the Count of Lara.
Ang. O, my dear lady! how shall I be grateful
For so much kindness?
Pre. I deserve no thanks.
Thank Heaven, not me.
Ang. Both Heaven and you.
Pre. Farewell.
Remember that you come again to-morrow.
Ang. I will. And may the blessed Virgin guard you,
And all good angels. [*Exit.*
Pre. May they guard thee too,
And all the poor; for they have need of angels.
Now bring me, dear Dolores, my Basquiña,
My richest maja dress,—my dancing dress,
And my most precious jewels! Make me look
Fairer than night e'er saw me! I've a prize
To win this day, worthy of Preciosa!

[*Enter* Beltran Cruzado.]

Cruz. Ave Maria!
Pre. O God! my evil genius!
What seekest thou here to-day?
Cruz. Thyself,—my child.
Pre. What is thy will with me?
Cruz. Gold! gold!
Pre. I gave thee yesterday; I have no more.
Cruz. The gold of the Busné,[1]—give me his gold!
Pre. I gave the last in charity to-day.
Cruz. That is a foolish lie.

[1] *Busné* is the name given by the Gipsies to all who are not of their race.

Pre. It is the truth.
Cruz. Curses upon thee! Thou art not my child!
Hast thou given gold away, and not to me?
Not to thy father? To whom then?
Pre. To one
Who needs it more.
Cruz. No one can need it more.
Pre. Thou art not poor.
Cruz. What, I, who lurk about
In dismal suburbs and unwholesome lanes;
I, who am housed worse than the galley slave;
I, who am fed worse than the kennelled hound;
I, who am clothed in rags,—Beltran Cruzado,—
Not poor!
Pre. Thou hast a stout heart and strong hands.
Thou canst supply thy wants; what wouldst thou more?
Cruz. The gold of the Busné! give me his gold!
Pre. Beltran Cruzado! hear me once for all.
I speak the truth. So long as I had gold,
I gave it to thee freely, at all times,
Never denied thee; never had a wish
But to fulfil thine own. Now go in peace!
Be merciful, be patient, and, ere long,
Thou shalt have more.
Cruz. And if I have it not,
Thou shalt no longer dwell here in rich chambers,
Wear silken dresses, feed on dainty food,
And live in idleness; but go with me,
Dance the Romalis in the public streets,
And wander wild again o'er field and fell;
For here we stay not long.
Pre. What! march again?
Cruz. Ay, with all speed. I hate the crowded town!
I cannot breathe shut up within its gates!
Air,—I want air, and sunshine, and blue sky,

The feeling of the breeze upon my face,
The feeling of the turf beneath my feet,
And no walls but the far-off mountain-tops.
Then I am free and strong,—once more myself,
Beltran Cruzado, Count of the Calés![1]

Pre. God speed thee on thy march!—I cannot go.

Cruz. Remember who I am, and who thou art.
Be silent and obey! Yet one thing more.
Bartolomé Román——

Pre. [*with emotion*]. O, I beseech thee!
If my obedience and blameless life,
If my humility and meek submission
In all things hitherto, can move in thee
One feeling of compassion; if thou art
Indeed my father, and canst trace in me
One look of her who bore me, or one tone
That doth remind thee of her, let it plead
In my behalf, who am a feeble girl,
Too feeble to resist, and do not force me
To wed that man! I am afraid of him!
I do not love him! On my knees I beg thee
To use no violence, nor do in haste
What cannot be undone!

Cruz. O child, child, child!
Thou hast betrayed thy secret, as a bird
Betrays her nest, by striving to conceal it.
I will not leave thee here in the great city
To be a grandee's mistress. Make thee ready
To go with us; and until then remember
A watchful eye is on thee. [*Exit.*

Pre. Woe is me!
I have a strange misgiving in my heart!
But that one deed of charity I will do,
Befall what may; they cannot take that from me.
[*Exit.*

[1] The Gipsies call themselves Calés. See Borrow's valuable and extremely interesting work, *The Zincali; or, An Account of the Gipsies in Spain.*

SCENE II.—*A room in the* ARCHBISHOP'S *palace. The* ARCHBISHOP *and a* CARDINAL *seated.*

Arch. Knowing how near it touched the public morals,
And that our age is grown corrupt and rotten
By such excesses, we have sent to Rome,
Beseeching that his Holiness would aid
In curing the gross surfeit of the time,
By seasonable stop put here in Spain
To bull-fights and lewd dances on the stage.
All this you know.
Card. Know and approve.
Arch. And further,
That, by a mandate from his Holiness,
The first have been suppressed.
Card. I trust for ever;
It was a cruel sport.
Arch. A barbarous pastime,
Disgraceful to the land that calls itself
Most Catholic and Christian.
Card. Yet the people
Murmur at this; and, if the public dances
Should be condemned upon too slight occasion,
Worse ills might follow than the ills we cure.
As *Panem et Circenses* was the cry
Among the Roman populace of old,
So *Pan y Toros* is the cry in Spain.
Hence I would act advisedly herein;
And therefore have induced your grace to see
These national dances, ere we interdict them.

[*Enter a Servant.*]

Ser. The dancing-girl, and with her the musicians
Your grace was pleased to order, wait without.
Arch. Bid them come in. Now shall your eyes behold
In what angelic yet voluptuous shape
The Devil came to tempt Saint Anthony.

[*Enter* Preciosa, *with a mantle thrown over her head. She advances slowly, in a modest, half-timid attitude.*]

Card. [*aside*]. O, what a fair and ministering angel
Was lost to Heaven when this sweet woman fell!
Pre. [*kneeling before the Archbishop*]. I have obeyed the order of your grace.
If I intrude upon your better hours,
I proffer this excuse, and here beseech
Your holy benediction.
Arch. May God bless thee,
And lead thee to a better life. Arise.
Card. [*aside*]. Her acts are modest, and her words discreet!
I did not look for this! Come hither, child.
Is thy name Preciosa?
Pre. Thus I am called.
Card. That is a Gipsy name. Who is thy father?
Pre. Beltran Cruzado, Count of the Calés.
Arch. I have a dim remembrance of that man.
He was a bold and reckless character,
A sun-burnt Ishmael!
Card. Dost thou remember
Thy earlier days?
Pre. Yes; by the Darro's side
My childhood passed. I can remember still
The river, and the mountains capped with snow;
The villages, where, yet a little child,
I told the traveller's fortune in the street;
The smuggler's horse, the brigand, and the shepherd,
The march across the moor; the halt at noon;
The red fire of the evening camp, that lighted
The forest where we slept; and, further back,
As in a dream or in some former life,
Gardens and palace walls.
Arch. 'Tis the Alhambra,

Under whose towers the Gipsy camp was pitched.
But the time wears; and we would see the dance.

Pre. Your grace shall be obeyed.

[*She lays aside her mantilla. The music of the cachuca is played, and the dance begins. The* Archbishop *and the* Cardinal *look on with gravity and an occasional frown; then make signs to each other; and, as the dance continues, become more and more pleased and excited; and at length rise from their seats, throw their caps in the air, and applaud vehemently as the scene closes.*]

Scene III.—*The Prado. A long avenue of trees leading to the gate of Atocha. On the right the dome and spires of a convent. A fountain. Evening.* Don Carlos *and* Hypolito *meeting.*

Carlos. Holá! Good evening, Don Hypolito.

Hyp. And a good evening to my friend, Don Carlos.
Some lucky star has led my steps this way.
I was in search of you.

Carlos. Command me always.

Hyp. Do you remember, in Quevedo's Dreams,
The miser who, upon the Day of Judgment,
Asks if his money-bags would rise?

Carlos. I do;
But what of that?

Hyp. I am that wretched man.

Carlos. You mean to tell me yours have risen empty?

Hyp. And amen! said my Cid Campeador.[1]

Carlos. Pray, how much need you?

Hyp. Some half-dozen ounces,
Which, with due interest——

Carlos [*giving his purse*]. What, am I a Jew,

[1] A line from the ancient Poema del Cid.

To put my moneys out at usury?
Here is my purse.
Hyp. Thank you. A pretty purse,
Made by the hand of some fair Madrilena;
Perhaps a keepsake?
Carlos. No, 'tis at your service.
Hyp. Thank you again. Lie there, good Chrysostom,
And with thy golden mouth remind me often,
I am the debtor of my friend.
Carlos. But tell me,
Come you to-day from Alcalá?
Hyp. This moment.
Carlos. And pray, how fares the brave Victorian?
Hyp. Indifferent well; that is to say, not well.
A damsel has ensnared him with the glances
Of her dark, roving eyes, as herdsmen catch
A steer of Andalusia with a lazo.
He is in love.
Carlos. And is it faring ill
To be in love?
Hyp. In his case very ill.
Carlos. Why so?
Hyp. For many reasons. First and foremost,
Because he is in love with an ideal;
A creature of his own imagination;
A child of air; an echo of his heart;
And, like a lily on a river floating,
She floats upon the river of his thoughts![1]
Carlos. A common thing with poets. But who is
This floating lily? For, in fine, some woman,
Some living woman—not a mere ideal—
Must wear the outward semblance of his thought.
Who is it? Tell me.
Hyp. Well, it is a woman!
But, look you, from the coffer of his heart
He brings forth precious jewels to adorn her,
As pious priests adorn some favourite saint
With gems and gold, until at length she gleams

[1] The expression is from Dante. See Appendix.

One blaze of glory. Without these, you know,
And the priest's benediction, 'tis a doll.
Carlos. Well, well! who is this doll?
Hyp. Why, who do you think?
Carlos. His cousin Violante.
Hyp. Guess again.
To ease his labouring heart, in the last storm
He threw her overboard, with all her ingots.
Carlos. I cannot guess; so tell me who it is.
Hyp. Not I.
Carlos. Why not?
Hyp. [*mysteriously*]. Why? Because Mari Franca
Was married four leagues out of Salamanca![1]
Carlos. Jesting aside, who is it?
Hyp. Preciosa.
Carlos. Impossible! The Count of Lara tells me
She is not virtuous.
Hyp. Did I say she was?
The Roman Emperor Claudius had a wife
Whose name was Messalina, as I think;
Valeria Messalina was her name.
But hist! I see him yonder through the trees,
Walking as in a dream.
Carlos. He comes this way.
Hyp. It has been truly said by some wise man,
That money, grief, and love cannot be hidden.

[*Enter* VICTORIAN *in front.*]

Vict. Where'er thy step has passed is holy ground!
These groves are sacred! I behold thee walking
Under these shadowy trees, where we have walked
At evening, and I feel thy presence now;
Feel that the place has taken a charm from thee,
And is for ever hallowed.
Hyp. Mark him well!
See how he strides away with lordly air,

[1] A common Spanish proverb, used to turn aside a question one does not wish to answer.

Like that odd guest of stone, that grim Commander
Who comes to sup with Juan in the play.
Carlos. What ho! Victorian!
Hyp. Wilt thou sup with us?
Vict. Holá! amigos! Faith, I did not see you.
How fares Don Carlos?
Carlos. At your service ever.
Vict. How is that young and green-eyed Gaditana
That you both wot of?
Carlos. Ay, soft, emerald eyes!
She has gone back to Cadiz.
Hyp. *Ay de mí!*
Vict. You are much to blame for letting her go back.
A pretty girl; and in her tender eyes
Just that soft shade of green[1] we sometimes see
In evening skies.
Hyp. But, speaking of green eyes,
Are thine green?
Vict. Not a whit. Why so?
Hyp. I think
The slightest shade of green would be becoming,
For thou art jealous.
Vict. No, I am not jealous.
Hyp. Thou shouldst be.
Vict. Why?
Hyp. Because thou art in love,
And they who are in love are always jealous.
Therefore thou shouldst be.
Vict. Marry, is that all?
Farewell; I am in haste. Farewell, Don Carlos.
Thou sayest I should be jealous?
Hyp. Ay, in truth
I fear there is reason. Be upon thy guard.
I hear it whispered that the Count of Lara
Lays siege to the same citadel.
Vict. Indeed!
Then he will have his labour for his pains.

[1] See Appendix.

Hyp. He does not think so, and Don Carlos tells me
He boasts of his success.
Vict. How's this, Don Carlos?
Carlos. Some hints of it I heard from his own lips.
He spoke but lightly of the lady's virtue,
As a gay man might speak.
Vict. Death and damnation!
I'll cut his lying tongue out of his mouth,
And throw it to my dog! But no, no, no!
This cannot be. You jest, indeed you jest.
Trifle with me no more. For otherwise
We are no longer friends. And so, farewell! [*Exit.*
Hyp. Now what a coil is here! The Avenging Child
Hunting the traitor Quadros to his death,[1]
And the great Moor Calaynos, when he rode
To Paris for the ears of Oliver,
Were nothing to him! O hot-headed youth!
But come; we will not follow. Let us join
The crowd that pours into the Prado. There
We shall find merrier company; I see
The Marialonzos and the Almavivas,
And fifty fans, that beckon me already. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—PRECIOSA'S *Chamber. She is sitting, with a book in her hand, near a table, on which are flowers. A bird singing in its cage. The* COUNT OF LARA *enters behind unperceived.*

Pre. [*reads*].

All are sleeping, weary heart!
Thou, thou only sleepless art!

Heigho! I wish Victorian were here.
I know not what it is makes me so restless!
[*The bird sings.*]
Thou little prisoner with thy motley coat,
That from thy vaulted, wiry dungeon singest,

[1] See the ancient Ballads of El Infante Venjador and Calaynos.

Like thee I am a captive, and, like thee,
I have a gentle gaoler. Lack-a-day!

> All are sleeping, weary heart!
> Thou, thou only sleepless art!
> All this throbbing, all this aching,
> Evermore shall keep thee waking,
> For a heart in sorrow breaking
> Thinketh ever of its smart.

Thou speakest truly, poet! and methinks
More hearts are breaking in this world of ours
Than one would say. In distant villages
And solitudes remote, where winds have wafted
The barbed seeds of love, or birds of passage
Scattered them in their flight, do they take root
And grow in silence, and in silence perish.
Who hears the falling of the forest leaf?
Or who takes note of every flower that dies?
Heigho! I wish Victorian would come.
Dolores!

[*Turns to lay down her book, and perceives the* COUNT.]

Ha!

Lara. Señora, pardon me!

Pre. How's this? Dolores!

Lara. Pardon me——

Pre. Dolores!

Lara. Be not alarmed; I found no one in waiting.
If I have been too bold——

Pre. [*turning her back upon him*]. You are too bold!
Retire! retire, and leave me!

Lara. My dear lady,
First hear me! I beseech you, let me speak.
'Tis for your good I come.

Pre. [*turning toward him with indignation*]. Begone! Begone!
You are the Count of Lara, but your deeds
Would make the statues of your ancestors
Blush on their tombs! Is it Castilian honour,
Is it Castilian pride, to steal in here

Upon a friendless girl, to do her wrong?
O shame! shame! shame! that you, a nobleman,
Should be so little noble in your thoughts
As to send jewels here to win my love,
And think to buy my honour with your gold!
I have no words to tell you how I scorn you!
Begone! The sight of you is hateful to me!
Begone, I say!

Lara. Be calm; I will not harm you.

Pre. Because you dare not.

Lara. I dare anything!
Therefore beware! You are deceived in me.
In this false world, we do not always know
Who are our friends and who our enemies.
We all have enemies, and all need friends.
Even you, fair Preciosa, here at court
Have foes who seek to wrong you.

Pre. If to this
I owe the honour of the present visit,
You might have spared the coming. Having spoken,
Once more I beg you, leave me to myself.

Lara. I thought it but a friendly part to tell you
What strange reports are current here in town.
For my own self, I do not credit them;
But there are many who, not knowing you,
Will lend a readier ear.

Pre. There was no need
That you should take upon yourself the duty
Of telling me these tales.

Lara. Malicious tongues
Are ever busy with your name.

Pre. Alas!
I've no protectors. I am a poor girl,
Exposed to insults and unfeeling jests.
They wound me, yet I cannot shield myself.
I give no cause for these reports. I live
Retired, and visited by none.

Lara. By none?
O, then, indeed, you are much wronged!

Pre. How mean you?

Lara. Nay, nay; I will not wound your gentle soul
By the report of idle tales.
Pre. Speak out!
What are these idle tales? You need not spare me.
Lara. I will deal frankly with you. Pardon me;
This window, as I think, looks towards the street,
And this into the Prado, does it not?
In yon high house, beyond the garden wall,—
You see the roof there just above the trees,—
There lives a friend, who told me yesterday,
That on a certain night,—be not offended
If I too plainly speak,—he saw a man
Climb to your chamber window. You are silent!
I would not blame you, being young and fair——
[*He tries to embrace her. She starts back, and draws a dagger from her bosom.*]
Pre. Beware! beware! I am a Gipsy girl!
Lay not your hand upon me. One step nearer
And I will strike!
Lara. Pray you, put up that dagger.
Fear not.
Pre. I do not fear. I have a heart
In whose strength I can trust.
Lara. Listen to me.
I come here as your friend,—I am your friend,—
And by a single word can put a stop
To all those idle tales, and make your name
Spotless as lilies are. Here on my knees,
Fair Preciosa! on my knees I swear
I love you even to madness, and that love
Has driven me to break the rules of custom,
And force myself unasked into your presence.

[VICTORIAN *enters behind.*]

Pre. Rise, Count of Lara! This is not the place
For such as you are. It becomes you not
To kneel before me. I am strangely moved
To see one of your rank thus low and humbled;
For your sake I will put aside all anger,

All unkind feeling, all dislike, and speak
In gentleness, as most becomes a woman,
And as my heart now prompts me. I no more
Will hate you, for all hate is painful to me.
But if, without offending modesty
And that reserve which is a woman's glory,
I may speak freely, I will teach my heart
To love you.

Lara. O sweet angel!

Pre. Ay, in truth,
Far better than you love yourself or me.

Lara. Give me some sign of this,—the slightest token.
Let me but kiss your hand!

Pre. Nay, come no nearer.
The words I utter are its sign and token.
Misunderstand me not! Be not deceived!
The love wherewith I love you is not such
As you would offer me. For you come here
To take from me the only thing I have,
My honour. You are wealthy, you have friends
And kindred, and a thousand pleasant hopes
That fill your heart with happiness; but I
Am poor and friendless, having but one treasure,
And you would take that from me, and for what?
To flatter your own vanity, and make me
What you would most despise. O sir, such love,
That seeks to harm me, cannot be true love,
Indeed it cannot. But my love for you
Is of a different kind. It seeks your good.
It is a holier feeling. It rebukes
Your earthly passion, your unchaste desires,
And bids you look into your heart and see
How you do wrong that better nature in you,
And grieve your soul with sin.

Lara. I swear to you,
I would not harm you; I would only love you.
I would not take your honour, but restore it,
And in return I ask but some slight mark
Of your affection. If indeed you love me,

As you confess you do, O let me thus
With this embrace——
Vict. [*rushing forward*]. Hold ! hold ! This is too much.
What means this outrage?
Lara. First, what right have you
To question thus a nobleman of Spain?
Vict. I too am noble, and you are no more !
Out of my sight !
Lara. Are you the master here?
Vict. Ay, here and elsewhere, when the wrong of others
Gives me the right !
Pre. [*to* LARA]. Go ! I beseech you, go !
Vict. I shall have business with you, Count, anon !
Lara. You cannot come too soon ! [*Exit.*
Pre. Victorian !
O we have been betrayed !
Vict. Ha ! ha ! betrayed !
'Tis I have been betrayed, not we !—not we !
Pre. Dost thou imagine——
Vict. I imagine nothing ;
I see how 'tis thou wilest the time away
When I am gone !
Pre. O speak not in that tone !
It wounds me deeply.
Vict. 'Twas not meant to flatter.
Pre. Too well thou knowest the presence of that man
Is hateful to me !
Vict. Yet I saw thee stand
And listen to him, when he told his love.
Pre. I did not heed his words.
Vict. Indeed thou didst,
And answeredst them with love.
Pre. Hadst thou heard all——
Vict. I heard enough.
Pre. Be not so angry with me.
Vict. I am not angry ; I am very calm.

Pre. If thou wilt let me speak——
Vict. Nay, say no more.
I know too much already. Thou art false!
I do not like these Gipsy marriages!
Where is the ring I gave thee?
Pre. In my casket.
Vict. There let it rest! I would not have thee wear it;
I thought thee spotless, and thou art polluted.
Pre. I call the Heavens to witness——
Vict. Nay, nay, nay!
Take not the name of Heaven upon thy lips!
They are forsworn!
Pre. Victorian! dear Victorian!
Vict. I gave up all for thee; myself, my fame,
My hopes of fortune, ay, my very soul!
And thou hast been my ruin! Now, go on!
Laugh at my folly with thy paramour,
And, sitting on the Count of Lara's knee,
Say what a poor, fond fool Victorian was!
[*He casts her from him and rushes out.*]
Pre. And this from thee!
[*Scene closes.*]

SCENE V.—*The* COUNT OF LARA'S *rooms. Enter the* COUNT.

Lara. There's nothing in this world so sweet as love,
And next to love the sweetest thing is hate!
I've learned to hate, and therefore am revenged.
A silly girl to play the prude with me!
The fire that I have kindled——

[*Enter* FRANCISCO.]

Well, Francisco,
What tidings from Don Juan?
Fran. Good, my lord.
He will be present.
Lara. And the Duke of Lermos?

Fran. Was not at home.
Lara. How with the rest?
Fran. I've found
The men you wanted. They will be all there,
And at the given signal raise a whirlwind
Of such discordant noises, that the dance
Must cease for lack of music.
Lara. Bravely done.
Ah! little dost thou dream, sweet Preciosa,
What lies in wait for thee. Sleep shall not close
Thine eyes this night! Give me my cloak and sword. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*A retired spot beyond the city gates. Enter* VICTORIAN *and* HYPOLITO.

Vict. O shame! O shame! Why do I walk abroad
By daylight, when the very sunshine mocks me,
And voices, and familiar sights and sounds,
Cry "Hide thyself!" O what a thin partition
Doth shut out from the curious world the knowledge
Of evil deeds that have been done in darkness!
Disgrace has many tongues. My fears are windows,
Through which all eyes seem gazing. Every face
Expresses some suspicion of my shame,
And in derision seems to smile at me!
Hyp. Did I not caution thee? Did I not tell thee
I was but half-persuaded of her virtue?
Vict. And yet, Hypolito, we may be wrong,
We may be over-hasty in condemning!
The Count of Lara is a cursed villain.
Hyp. And therefore is she cursed, loving him.
Vict. She does not love him! 'Tis for gold! for gold!
Hyp. Ay, but remember, in the public streets
He shows a golden ring the Gipsy gave him,
A serpent with a ruby in its mouth.
Vict. She had that ring from me! God! she is false!

But I will be revenged! The hour is passed.
Where stays the coward?
Hyp. Nay, he is no coward;
A villain, if thou wilt, but not a coward.
I've seen him play with swords; it is his pastime.
And therefore be not over-confident,
He'll task thy skill anon. Look, here he comes.

[*Enter* LARA, *followed by* FRANCISCO.]

Lara. Good evening, gentlemen.
Hyp. Good evening, Count.
Lara. I trust I have not kept you long in waiting.
Vict. Not long, and yet too long. Are you prepared?
Lara. I am.
Hyp. It grieves me much to see this quarrel
Between you, gentlemen. Is there no way
Left open to accord this difference,
But you must make one with your swords?
Vict. No! none!
I do entreat thee, dear Hypolito,
Stand not between me and my foe. Too long
Our tongues have spoken. Let these tongues of steel
End our debate. Upon your guard, Sir Count!
[*They fight.* VICTORIAN *disarms the* COUNT.]
Your life is mine; and what shall now withhold me
From sending your vile soul to its account?
Lara. Strike! strike!
Vict. You are disarmed. I will not kill you.
I will not murder you. Take up your sword.
[FRANCISCO *hands the* COUNT *his sword, and* HYPOLITO *interposes.*]
Hyp. Enough! Let it end here! The Count of Lara
Has shown himself a brave man, and Victorian
A generous one, as ever. Now be friends.
Put up your swords; for, to speak frankly to you,

Your cause of quarrel is too slight a thing
To move you to extremes.
Lara. I am content.
I sought no quarrel. A few hasty words,
Spoken in the heat of blood, have led to this.
Vict. Nay, something more than that.
Lara. I understand you.
Therein I did not mean to cross your path.
To me the door stood open, as to others.
But, had I known the girl belonged to you,
Never would I have sought to win her from you.
The truth stands now revealed; she has been false
To both of us.
Vict. Ay, false as hell itself!
Lara. In truth I did not seek her; she sought me;
And told me how to win her, telling me
The hours when she was oftenest left alone.
Vict. Say, can you prove this to me? O, pluck out
These awful doubts, that goad me into madness!
Let me know all! all! all!
Lara. You shall know all.
Here is my page, who was the messenger
Between us. Question him. Was it not so,
Francisco?
Fran. Ay, my lord.
Lara. If further proof
Is needful, I have here a ring she gave me.
Vict. Pray, let me see that ring! It is the same.
[*Throws it upon the ground, and tramples upon it.*]
Thus may she perish who once wore that ring!
Thus do I spurn her from me; do thus trample
Her memory in the dust! O Count of Lara,
We both have been abused, been much abused!
I thank you for your courtesy and frankness.
Though, like the surgeon's hand, yours gave me pain,
Yet it has cured my blindness, and I thank you.
I now can see the folly I have done,

Though 'tis, alas! too late. So fare you well!
To-night I leave this hateful town for ever.
Regard me as your friend. Once more, farewell!

Hyp. Farewell, Sir Count.

[*Exeunt* VICTORIAN *and* HYPOLITO.

Lara. Farewell! farewell!
Thus have I cleared the field of my worst foe!
I have none else to fear: the fight is done,
The citadel is stormed, the victory won!

[*Exit with* FRANCISCO.

SCENE VII.—*A lane in the suburbs. Night. Enter* CRUZADO *and* BARTOLOMÉ.

Cruz. And so, Bartolomé, the expedition failed. But where wast thou, for the most part?

Bart. In the Guadarrama mountains, near San Ildefonso.

Cruz. And thou bringest nothing back with thee! Didst thou rob no one?

Bart. There was no one to rob, save a party of students from Segovia, who looked as if they would rob us; and a jolly little friar, who had nothing in his pockets but a missal and a loaf of bread.

Cruz. Pray, then, what brings thee back to Madrid?

Bart. First tell me what keeps thee here?

Cruz. Preciosa.

Bart. And she brings me back. Hast thou forgotten thy promise?

Cruz. The two years are not passed yet. Wait patiently. The girl shall be thine.

Bart. I hear she has a Busné lover.

Cruz. That is nothing.

Bart. I do not like it. I hate him,—the son of a Busné harlot. He goes in and out, and speaks with her alone, and I must stand aside and wait his pleasure.

Cruz. Be patient, I say. Thou shalt have thy

revenge. When the time comes, thou shalt waylay him.

Bart. Meanwhile, show me her house.

Cruz. Come this way. But thou wilt not find her. She dances at the play to-night.

Bart. No matter. Show me the house. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII.—*The Theatre. The orchestra plays the cachucha. Sound of castanets behind the scenes. The curtain rises, and discovers* PRECIOSA *in the attitude of commencing the dance. The cachucha. Tumult; hisses; cries of "Brava!" and "Afuera!" She falters and pauses. The music stops. General confusion.* PRECIOSA *faints.*

SCENE IX.—*The* COUNT OF LARA'S *Chambers.* LARA *and his friends at supper.*

Lara. So, Caballeros, once more many thanks! You have stood by me bravely in this matter. Pray fill your glasses.

Juan. Did you mark, Don Luis, How pale she looked, when first the noise began, And then stood still, with her large eyes dilated! Her nostrils spread! her lips apart! her bosom Tumultuous as the sea!

Luis. I pitied her.

Lara. Her pride is humbled; and this very night I mean to visit her.

Juan. Will you serenade her?

Lara. No music! no more music!

Luis. Why not music? It softens many hearts.

Lara. Not in the humour She now is in. Music would madden her.

Juan. Try golden cymbals.

Luis. Yes, try Don Dinero; A mighty wooer is your Don Dinero.

Lara. To tell the truth, then, I have bribed her maid.

But, Caballeros, you dislike this wine.
A bumper and away; for the night wears.
A health to Preciosa! [*They rise and drink.*
All. Preciosa!
Lara [*holding up his glass*]. Thou bright and flaming minister of Love!
Thou wonderful magician! who hast stolen
My secret from me, and 'mid sighs of passion
Caught from my lips, with red and fiery tongue,
Her precious name! O never more henceforth
Shall mortal lips press thine; and never more
A mortal name be whispered in thine ear.
Go! keep my secret.
[*Drinks, and dashes the goblet down.*]
Juan. *Ite! missa est!*
[*Scene closes.*]

SCENE X.—*Street and garden wall. Night. Enter* CRUZADO *and* BARTOLOMÉ.

Cruz. This is the garden wall, and above it, yonder, is her house. The window in which thou seest the light is her window. But we will not go in now.
Bart. Why not?
Cruz. Because she is not at home.
Bart. No matter; we can wait. But how is this? The gate is bolted. [*Sound of guitars and voices in a neighbouring street.*] Hark! There comes her lover with his infernal serenade! Hark!

SONG

Good-night! Good-night, beloved!
I come to watch o'er thee!
To be near thee,—to be near thee,
Alone is peace for me.

Thine eyes are stars of morning,
Thy lips are crimson flowers!
Good night! Good night, beloved,
While I count the weary hours.

Cruz. They are not coming this way.
Bart. Wait, they begin again.

SONG [*coming nearer*]

Ah ! thou moon that shinest
Argent-clear above !
All night long enlighten
My sweet lady love !
Moon that shinest,
All night long enlighten !

Bart. Woe be to him if he comes this way !
Cruz. Be quiet, they are passing down the street.

SONG [*dying away*]

The nuns in the cloister
Sang to each other ;
For so many sisters
Is there not one brother !
Ay, for the partridge, mother !
The cat has run away with the partridge !
Puss ! puss ! puss !

Bart. Follow that ! Follow that ! Come with me. Puss ! puss !

[*Exeunt. On the opposite side enter the* COUNT OF LARA *and gentlemen, with* FRANCISCO.]

Lara. The gate is fast. Over the wall, Francisco, And draw the bolt. There, so, and so, and over. Now, gentlemen, come in, and help me scale Yon balcony. How now ? Her light still burns. Move warily. Make fast the gate, Francisco.

[*Exeunt. Re-enter* CRUZADO *and* BARTOLOMÉ.]

Bart. They went in at the gate. Hark ! I hear them in the garden. [*Tries the gate.*] Bolted again ! Vive Christo ! Follow me over the wall.

[*They climb the wall.*]

SCENE XI.—PRECIOSA'S *Bed-chamber. Midnight. She is sleeping in an arm-chair, in an undress.* DOLORES *watching her.*

Dol. She sleeps at last !

[*Opens the window and listens.*]

All silent in the street,
And in the garden. Hark !

Pre. [*in her sleep*]. I must go hence!
Give me my cloak!
Dol. He comes! I hear his footsteps!
Pre. Go tell them that I cannot dance to-night;
I am too ill! Look at me! See the fever
That burns upon my cheek! I must go hence,
I am too weak to dance.
[*Signal from the garden.*]
Dol. [*from the window*]. Who's there?
Voice [*from below*]. A friend.
Dol. I will undo the door. Wait till I come.
Pre. I must go hence. I pray you do not harm me!
Shame! shame! to treat a feeble woman thus!
Be you but kind, I will do all things for you.
I'm ready now,—give me my castanets.
Where is Victorian? Oh, those hateful lamps!
They glare upon me like an evil eye.[1]
I cannot stay. Hark! how they mock at me!
They hiss at me like serpents! Save me! save me!
[*She wakes.*]
How late is it, Dolores?
Dol. It is midnight.
Pre. We must be patient. Smooth this pillow for me.
[*She sleeps again. Noise from the garden, and voices.*]
Voice. Muera!
Another Voice. O villains! villains!
Lara. So! have at you!
Voice. Take that!
Lara. O, I am wounded!
Dol. [*shutting the window*]. Jesu Maria!

[1] See Appendix.

ACT III

SCENE I.—*A cross-road through a wood. In the background a distant village spire.* VICTORIAN *and* HYPOLITO, *as travelling students, with guitars, sitting under the trees.* HYPOLITO *plays and sings.*

SONG

Ah, Love!
Perjured, false, treacherous Love!
Enemy
Of all that mankind may not rue!
Most untrue
To him who keeps most faith with thee.
Woe is me!
The falcon has the eyes of the dove.
Ah! Love!
Perjured, false, treacherous Love!

Vict. Yes, Love is ever busy with his shuttle,
Is ever weaving into life's dull warp
Bright, gorgeous flowers and scenes Arcadian;
Hanging our gloomy prison-house about
With tapestries, that make its walls dilate
In never-ending vistas of delight.
Hyp. Thinking to walk in those Arcadian pastures,
Thou hast run thy noble head against the wall.

SONG [*continued*]

Thy deceits
Give us clearly to comprehend,
Whither tend
All thy pleasures, all thy sweets!
They are cheats,
Thorns below and flowers above.
Ah, Love!
Perjured, false, treacherous Love!

Vict. A very pretty song. I thank thee for it.
Hyp. It suits thy case.
Vict. Indeed, I think it does.
What wise man wrote it?

Hyp. Lopez Maldonado.
Vict. In truth, a pretty song.
Hyp. With much truth in it.
I hope thou wilt profit by it; and in earnest
Try to forget this lady of thy love.
Vict. I will forget her! All dear recollections
Pressed in my heart, like flowers within a book,
Shall be torn out, and scattered to the winds!
I will forget her! But perhaps hereafter,
When she shall learn how heartless is the world,
A voice within her will repeat my name,
And she will say, "He was indeed my friend!"
O, would I were a soldier, not a scholar,
That the loud march, the deafening beat of drums,
The shattering blast of the brass-throated trumpet,
The din of arms, the onslaught and the storm,
And a swift death, might make me deaf for ever
To the upbraidings of this foolish heart!
Hyp. Then let that foolish heart upbraid no more!
To conquer love, one need but will to conquer.
Vict. Yet, good Hypolito, it is in vain
I throw into Oblivion's sea the sword
That pierces me; for, like Excalibar,
With gemmed and flashing hilt, it will not sink.
There rises from below a hand that grasps it,
And waves it in the air; and wailing voices
Are heard along the shore.
Hyp. And yet at last
Down sank Excalibar to rise no more.
This is not well. In truth, it vexes me.
Instead of whistling to the steeds of Time,
To make them jog on merrily with life's burden,
Like a dead weight thou hangest on the wheels.
Thou art too young, too full of lusty health
To talk of dying.
Vict. Yet I fain would die!
To go through life, unloving and unloved;
To feel that thirst and hunger of the soul
We cannot still; that longing, that wild impulse,

And struggle after something we have not
And cannot have; the effort to be strong;
And, like the Spartan boy, to smile, and smile,
While secret wounds do bleed beneath our cloaks;
All this the dead feel not,—the dead alone!
Would I were with them!

Hyp. We shall all be soon.

Vict. It cannot be too soon; for I am weary
Of the bewildering masquerade of Life,
Where strangers walk as friends, and friends as strangers;
Where whispers overheard betray false hearts;
And through the mazes of the crowd we chase
Some form of loveliness, that smiles, and beckons,
And cheats us with fair words, only to leave us
A mockery and a jest; maddened,—confused,—
Not knowing friend from foe.

Hyp. Why seek to know?
Enjoy the merry shrove-tide of thy youth!
Take each fair mask for what it gives itself,
Nor strive to look beneath it.

Vict. I confess,
That were the wiser part. But hope no longer
Comforts my soul. I am a wretched man,
Much like a poor and shipwrecked mariner,
Who, struggling to climb up into the boat,
Has both his bruised and bleeding hands cut off,
And sinks again into the weltering sea,
Helpless and hopeless!

Hyp. Yet thou shalt not perish.
The strength of thine own arm is thy salvation.
Above thy head, through rifted clouds, there shines
A glorious star. Be patient. Trust thy star!

[*Sound of a village-bell in the distance.*]

Vict. Ave Maria! I hear the sacristan
Ringing the chimes from yonder village belfry!
A solemn sound, that echoes far and wide
Over the red roofs of the cottages,
And bids the labouring hind a-field, the shepherd
Guarding his flock, the lonely muleteer,

And all the crowd in village streets, stand still,
And breathe a prayer unto the blessed Virgin !

Hyp. Amen ! amen ! Not half a league from hence
The village lies.

Vict. This path will lead us to it,
Over the wheat fields, where the shadows sail
Across the running sea, now green, now blue,
And, like an idle mariner on the main,
Whistles the quail. Come, let us hasten on.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Public square in the village of Guadarrama. The Ave Maria still tolling. A crowd of villagers, with their hats in their hands, as if in prayer. In front, a group of Gipsies. The bell rings a merrier peal. A Gipsy dance. Enter* PANCHO, *followed by* PEDRO CRESPO.

Pan. Make room, ye vagabonds and Gipsy thieves !
Make room for the Alcalde and for me !

Cres. Keep silence all ! I have an edict here
From our most gracious lord, the King of Spain,
Jerusalem, and the Canary Islands,
Which I shall publish in the market-place.
Open your ears and listen !

[*Enter the* PADRE CURA *at the door of his cottage.*]

Padre Cura,
Good day ! and, pray you, hear this edict read.

Padre. Good day, and God be with you. Pray, what is it?

Cres. An act of banishment against the Gipsies !

[*Agitation and murmurs in the crowd.*]

Pan. Silence !

Cres. [*reads*]. "I hereby order and command
That the Egyptian and Chaldean strangers,
Known by the name of Gipsies, shall henceforth
Be banished from the realm, as vagabonds
And beggars ; and if, after seventy days,

Any be found within our kingdom's bounds,
They shall receive a hundred lashes each;
The second time, shall have their ears cut off;
The third, be slaves for life to him who takes them,
Or burnt as heretics. Signed, I, the King."
Vile miscreants and creatures unbaptized!
You hear the law! Obey and disappear!

Pan. And if in seventy days you are not gone,
Dead or alive I make you all my slaves.

[*The Gipsies go out in confusion, showing signs of fear and discontent.* PANCHO *follows.*]

Padre. A righteous law! A very righteous law!
Pray you, sit down.

Cres. I thank you heartily.

[*They seat themselves on a bench at the* PADRE CURA'S *door. Sound of guitars heard at a distance, approaching during the dialogue which follows.*]

A very righteous judgment, as you say.
Now tell me, Padre Cura,—you know all things,—
How came these Gipsies into Spain?

Padre. Why, look you;
They came with Hercules from Palestine,
And hence are thieves and vagrants, Sir Alcalde,
As the Simoniacs from Simon Magus.
And, look you, as Fray Jayme Bleda says,
There are a hundred marks to prove a Moor
Is not a Christian, so 'tis with the Gipsies.
They never marry, never go to mass,
Never baptize their children, nor keep Lent,
Nor see the inside of a church,—nor—nor——

Cres. Good reasons, good, substantial reasons, all!
No matter for the other ninety-five.
They should be burnt, I see it plain enough,—
They should be burnt.

[*Enter* VICTORIAN *and* HYPOLITO *playing.*]

Padre. And pray, whom have we here?

Cres. More vagrants! By Saint Lazarus, more vagrants!

Hyp. Good evening, gentlemen! Is this Guadarrama?

Padre. Yes, Guadarrama, and good evening to you.

Hyp. We seek the Padre Cura of the village;
And, judging from your dress and reverend mien,
You must be he.

Padre. I am. Pray, what's your pleasure?

Hyp. We are poor students, travelling in vacation.
You know this mark?

[*Touching the wooden spoon in his hat-band.*]

Padre [*joyfully*]. Ay, know it, and have worn it.

Cres. [*aside*]. Soup-eaters! by the mass! The worst of vagrants!
And there's no law against them. Sir, your servant.

[*Exit.*

Padre. Your servant, Pedro Crespo.

Hyp. Padre Cura,
From the first moment I beheld your face,
I said within myself, "This is the man!"
There is a certain something in your looks,
A certain scholar-like and studious something,—
You understand,—which cannot be mistaken;
Which marks you as a very learned man,
In fine, as one of us.

Vict. [*aside*]. What impudence!

Hyp. As we approached, I said to my companion,
"That is the Padre Cura; mark my words!"
Meaning your Grace. "The other man," said I,
"Who sits so awkwardly upon the bench,
Must be the sacristan."

Padre. Ah! said you so?
Why, that was Pedro Crespo, the alcalde!

Hyp. Indeed! you much astonish me! His air
Was not so full of dignity and grace
As an alcalde's should be.

Padre. That is true.
He is out of humour with some vagrant Gipsies,
Who have their camp here in the neighbourhood.
There is nothing so undignified as anger.

Hyp. The Padre Cura will excuse our boldness,

If, from his well-known hospitality,
We crave a lodging for the night.
Padre. I pray you!
You do me honour! I am but too happy
To have such guests beneath my humble roof.
It is not often that I have occasion
To speak with scholars; and *Emollit mores,*
Nec sinit esse feros, Cicero says.
Hyp. 'Tis Ovid, is it not?
Padre. No, Cicero.
Hyp. Your Grace is right. You are the better scholar.
Now what a dunce was I to think it Ovid!
But hang me if it is not! (*aside*).
Padre. Pass this way.
He was a very great man, was Cicero!
Pray you, go in, go in! no ceremony. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A room in the* PADRE CURA'S *house.*
Enter the PADRE *and* HYPOLITO.

Padre. So then, Señor, you come from Alcalá.
I am glad to hear it. It was there I studied.
Hyp. And left behind an honoured name, no doubt.
How may I call your Grace?
Padre. Gerónimo
De Santillana, at your Honour's service.
Hyp. Descended from the Marquis Santillana?
From the distinguished poet?
Padre. From the Marquis,
Not from the poet.
Hyp. Why, they were the same.
Let me embrace you! O some lucky star
Has brought me hither! Yet once more!—once more!
Your name is ever green in Alcalá;
And our professor, when we are unruly,
Will shake his hoary head, and say, "Alas!
It was not so in Santillana's time!"

Padre. I did not think my name remembered there.
Hyp. More than remembered ; it is idolized.
Padre. Of what professor speak you?
Hyp. Timoneda.
Padre. I don't remember any Timoneda.
Hyp. A grave and sombre man, whose beetling brow
O'erhangs the rushing current of his speech
As rocks o'er rivers hang. Have you forgotten?
Padre. Indeed, I have. O those were pleasant days,—
Those college days ! I ne'er shall see the like !
I had not buried then so many hopes !
I had not buried then so many friends !
I've turned my back on what was then before me ;
And the bright faces of my young companions
Are wrinkled like my own, or are no more.
Do you remember Cueva?
Hyp. Cueva? Cueva?
Padre. Fool that I am ! He was before your time.
You're a mere boy, and I am an old man.
Hyp. I should not like to try my strength with you.
Padre. Well, well. But I forget; you must be hungry.
Martina ! ho ! Martina ! 'Tis my niece.

[*Enter* MARTINA.]

Hyp. You may be proud of such a niece as that.
I wish I had a niece. *Emollit mores.* [*Aside.*
He was a very great man, was Cicero !
Your servant, fair Martina.
Mart. Servant, sir.
Padre. This gentleman is hungry. See thou to it.
Let us have supper.
Mart. 'Twill be ready soon.
Padre. And bring a bottle of my Val-de-Peñas
Out of the cellar. Stay ; I'll go myself.
Pray you, Señor, excuse me. [*Exit.*
Hyp. Hist ! Martina !

One word with you. Bless me! what handsome eyes!
To-day there have been Gipsies in the village.
Is it not so?
Mart. There have been Gipsies here.
Hyp. Yes, and they told your fortune.
Mart. [*embarrassed*]. Told my fortune?
Hyp. Yes, yes; I know they did. Give me your hand.
I'll tell you what they said. They said,—they said,
The shepherd boy that loved you was a clown,
And him you should not marry. Was it not?
Mart. [*surprised*]. How know you that?
Hyp. O, I know more than that.
What a soft, little hand! And then they said,
A cavalier from court, handsome, and tall,
And rich, should come one day to marry you,
And you should be a lady. Was it not?
He has arrived, the handsome cavalier.
[*Tries to kiss her. She runs off. Enter* VICTORIAN *with a letter.*]
Vict. The muleteer has come.
Hyp. So soon?
Vict. I found him
Sitting at supper by the tavern door,
And, from a pitcher that he held aloft
His whole arm's length, drinking the blood-red wine.
Hyp. What news from Court!
Vict. He brought this letter only. [*Reads.*
O cursed perfidy! Why did I let
That lying tongue deceive me! Preciosa,
Sweet Preciosa! how art thou avenged!
Hyp. What news is this, that makes thy cheek turn pale,
And thy hand tremble?
Vict. O, most infamous!
The Count of Lara is a worthless villain!
Hyp. That is no news, forsooth.
Vict. He strove in vain

To steal from me the jewel of my soul,
The love of Preciosa. Not succeeding,
He swore to be revenged; and set on foot
A plot to ruin her, which has succeeded.
She has been hissed and hooted from the stage,
Her reputation stained by slanderous lies
Too foul to speak of; and, once more a beggar,
She roams a wanderer over God's green earth,
Housing with Gipsies!

Hyp. To renew again
The Age of Gold, and make the shepherd swains
Desperate with love, like Gaspar Gil's Diana.
Redit et Virgo!

Vict. Dear Hypolito,
How have I wronged that meek, confiding heart!
I will go seek for her; and with my tears
Wash out the wrong I've done her!

Hyp. O beware!
Act not that folly o'er again.

Vict. Ay, folly,
Delusion, madness, call it what thou wilt,
I will confess my weakness,—I still love her!
Still fondly love her!

[*Enter the* Padre Cura.]

Hyp. Tell us, Padre Cura,
Who are these Gipsies in the neighbourhood?

Padre. Beltran Cruzado and his crew.

Vict. Kind Heaven,
I thank thee! She is found! is found again!

Hyp. And have they with them a pale, beautiful girl,
Called Preciosa?

Padre. Ay, a pretty girl.
The gentleman seems moved.

Hyp. Yes, moved with hunger,
He is half-famished with this long day's journey.

Padre. Then, pray you, come this way. The supper waits. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A post-house on the road to Segovia, not far from the village of Guadarrama. Enter* CHISPA, *cracking a whip, and singing the cachucha.*

Chis. Halloo! Don Fulano! Let us have horses, and quickly. Alas, poor Chispa! what a dog's life dost thou lead! I thought, when I left my old master Victorian, the student, to serve my new master, Don Carlos, the gentleman, that I, too, should lead the life of a gentleman; should go to bed early, and get up late. For when the abbot plays cards, what can you expect of the friars? But, in running away from the thunder, I have run into the lightning. Here I am in hot chase after my master and his Gipsy girl. And a good beginning of the week it is, as he said who was hanged on Monday morning.

[*Enter* DON CARLOS.]

Carlos. Are not the horses ready yet?

Chis. I should think not, for the hostler seems to be asleep. Ho! within there! Horses! horses! horses!

[*He knocks at the gate with his whip, and enter* MOSQUITO, *putting on his jacket.*]

Mos. Pray, have a little patience. I'm not a musket.

Chis. Health and pistareens! I'm glad to see you come on dancing, padre! Pray, what's the news?

Mos. You cannot have fresh horses; because there are none.

Chis. Cachiporra! Throw that bone to another dog. Do I look like your aunt?

Mos. No; she has a beard.

Chis. Go to! go to!

Mos. Are you from Madrid?

Chis. Yes; and going to Estramadura. Get us horses.

Mos. What's the news at Court?

Chis. Why, the latest news is, that I am going to set up a coach, and I have already bought the whip.

[*Strikes him round the legs.*]

Mos. Oh! oh! you hurt me!

Carlos. Enough of this folly. Let us have horses. [*Gives money to* Mosquito.] It is almost dark; and we are in haste. But tell me, has a band of Gipsies passed this way of late?

Mos. Yes; and they are still in the neighbourhood.

Carlos. And where?

Mos. Across the fields yonder, in the woods near Guadarrama. [*Exit.*

Carlos. Now this is lucky. We will visit the Gipsy camp.

Chis. Are you not afraid of the evil eye? Have you a stag's horn with you?

Carlos. Fear not. We will pass the night at the village.

Chis. And sleep like the Squires of Hernan Daza, nine under one blanket.

Carlos. I hope we may find the Preciosa among them.

Chis. Among the Squires?

Carlos. No; among the Gipsies, blockhead!

Chis. I hope we may; for we are giving ourselves trouble enough on her account. Don't you think so? However, there is no catching trout without wetting one's trousers. Yonder come the horses.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene V.—*The Gipsy camp in the forest. Night. Gipsies working at a forge. Others playing cards by the firelight.*

GIPSIES [*at the forge sing*]

On the top of a mountain I stand,
With a crown of red gold in my hand,
Wild Moors come trooping over the lea,
O how from their fury shall I flee, flee, flee?
O how from their fury shall I flee?

1st Gipsy [*playing*]. Down with your John-Dorados,[1] my pigeon. Down with your John-Dorados, and let us make an end.

GIPSIES [*at the forge sing*].

Loud sang the Spanish cavalier,
And thus his ditty ran:
God send the Gipsy lassie here,
And not the Gipsy man.

1st Gipsy [*playing*]. There you are in your morocco.

2d Gipsy. One more game. The Alcalde's doves against the Padre Cura's new moon.

1st Gipsy. Have at you, Chirelin.

GIPSIES [*at the forge sing*].

At midnight when the moon began
To show her silver flame,
There came to him no Gipsy man,
The Gipsy lassie came.

[*Enter* BELTRAN CRUZADO.]

Cruz. Come hither, Murcigalleros and Rastilleros; leave work, leave play; listen to your orders for the night. [*Speaking to the right.*] You will get you to the village, mark you, by the stone cross.

Gipsies. Ay!

Cruz. [*to the left*]. And you, by the pole with the hermit's head upon it.

Gipsies. Ay!

[1] The Gipsy words in this scene may be thus interpreted:—

John-Dorados, pieces of gold.
Pigeon, a simpleton.
In your morocco, stripped.
Doves, sheets.
Moon, a shirt.
Chirelin, a thief.
Murcigalleros, those who steal at nightfall.
Rastilleros, footpads.
Hermit, highway robber.
Planets, candles.
Commandments, the fingers.
Saint Martin asleep, to rob a person asleep.
Lanterns, eyes.
Goblin, police officer.
Papagayo, a spy.
Vineyards and Dancing John, to take flight.

Cruz. As soon as you see the planets are out, in with you, and be busy with the ten commandments, under the sly, and Saint Martin asleep. D'ye hear?

Gipsies. Ay!

Cruz. Keep your lanterns open, and, if you see a goblin or a papagayo, take to your trampers. "Vineyards and Dancing John" is the word. Am I comprehended?

Gipsies. Ay! ay!

Cruz. Away, then!

[*Exeunt severally.* CRUZADO *walks up the stage and disappears among the trees. Enter* PRECIOSA.]

Pre. How strangely gleams through the gigantic trees
The red light of the forge! Wild, beckoning shadows
Stalk through the forest, ever and anon
Rising and bending with the flickering flame,
Then flitting into darkness! So within me
Strange hopes and fears do beckon to each other,
My brightest hopes giving dark fears a being
As the light does the shadow. Woe is me!
How still it is about me, and how lonely!

[BARTOLOMÉ *rushes in.*]

Bart. Ho! Preciosa!
Pre. O, Bartolomé!
Thou here?
Bart. Lo! I am here.
Pre. Whence comest thou?
Bart. From the rough ridges of the wild Sierra,
From caverns in the rocks, from hunger, thirst,
And fever! Like a wild wolf to the sheepfold,
Come I for thee, my lamb.
Pre. O touch me not!
The Count of Lara's blood is on thy hands!
The Count of Lara's curse is on thy soul!
Do not come near me! Pray, begone from here!
Thou art in danger! They have set a price
Upon thy head!

Bart. Ay, and I've wandered long
Among the mountains; and for many days
Have seen no human face, save the rough swineherd's.
The wind and rain have been my sole companions.
I shouted to them from the rocks thy name,
And the loud echo sent it back to me,
Till I grew mad. I could not stay from thee,
And I am here! Betray me, if thou wilt.
Pre. Betray thee? I betray thee?
Bart. Preciosa!
I come for thee! for thee I thus brave death!
Fly with me o'er the borders of this realm!
Fly with me!
Pre. Speak of that no more. I cannot.
I am thine no longer.
Bart. O, recall the time
When we were children! how we played together,
How we grew up together; how we plighted
Our hearts unto each other, even in childhood!
Fulfil thy promise, for the hour has come.
I am hunted from the kingdom, like a wolf!
Fulfil thy promise.
Pre. 'Twas my father's promise,
Not mine. I never gave my heart to thee,
Nor promised thee my hand!
Bart. False tongue of woman!
And heart more false!
Pre. Nay, listen unto me.
I will speak frankly. I have never loved thee;
I cannot love thee. This is not my fault,
It is my destiny. Thou art a man
Restless and violent. What wouldst thou with me,
A feeble girl, who have not long to live,
Whose heart is broken? Seek another wife,
Better than I, and fairer; and let not
Thy rash and headlong moods estrange her from thee.
Thou art unhappy in this hopeless passion.
I never sought thy love; never did aught

To make thee love me. Yet I pity thee,
And most of all I pity thy wild heart,
That hurries thee to crimes and deeds of blood.
Beware, beware of that.
Bart. For thy dear sake,
I will be gentle. Thou shalt teach me patience.
Pre. Then take this farewell, and depart in peace.
Thou must not linger here.
Bart. Come, come with me.
Pre. Hark! I hear footsteps.
Bart. I entreat thee, come!
Pre. Away! It is in vain.
Bart. Wilt thou not come?
Pre. Never!
Bart. Then woe, eternal woe, upon thee.
Thou shalt not be another's. Thou shalt die. [*Exit.*
Pre. All holy angels keep me in this hour!
Spirit of her who bore me, look upon me!
Mother of God, the glorified, protect me!
Christ and the saints, be merciful unto me!
Yet why should I fear death? What is it to die?
To leave all disappointment, care, and sorrow,
To leave all falsehood, treachery, and unkindness,
All ignominy, suffering, and despair,
And be at rest for ever! O, dull heart,
Be of good cheer! When thou shalt cease to beat,
Then shalt thou cease to suffer and complain!

[*Enter* VICTORIAN *and* HYPOLITO *behind.*]

Vict. 'Tis she! Behold, how beautiful she stands
Under the tent-like trees!
Hyp. A woodland nymph!
Vict. I pray thee, stand aside. Leave me.
Hyp. Be wary.
Do not betray thyself too soon.
Vict. [*disguising his voice*]. Hist! Gipsy!
Pre. [*aside, with emotion*]. That voice! that voice
from heaven! O speak again!
Who is it calls?
Vict. A friend.

Pre. [*aside*]. 'Tis he! 'Tis he!
I thank thee, Heaven, that thou hast heard my prayer,
And sent me this protector! Now be strong,
Be strong, my heart! I must dissemble here.
False friend or true?
Vict. A true friend to the true.
Fear not; come hither. So; can you tell fortunes?
Pre. Not in the dark. Come nearer to the fire.
Give me your hand. It is not crossed, I see.
Vict. [*putting a piece of gold into her hand*]. There is the cross.
Pre. Is't silver?
Vict. No, 'tis gold.
Pre. There's a fair lady at the Court, who loves you,
And for yourself alone.
Vict. Fie! the old story!
Tell me a better fortune for my money;
Not this old woman's tale!
Pre. You are passionate;
And this same passionate humour in your blood
Has marred your fortune. Yes, I see it now;
The line of life is crossed by many marks.
Shame! shame! O you have wronged the maid who loved you!
How could you do it?
Vict. I never loved a maid;
For she I loved was then a maid no more.
Pre. How know you that?
Vict. A little bird in the air
Whispered the secret.
Pre. There, take back your gold.
Your hand is cold, like a deceiver's hand!
There is no blessing in its charity!
Make her your wife, for you have been abused;
And you shall mend your fortunes, mending hers.
Vict. [*aside*]. How like an angel's speaks the tongue of woman,
When pleading in another's cause her own——

That is a pretty ring upon your finger.
Pray give it me. [*Tries to take the ring.*]
Pre. No; never from my hand
Shall that be taken!
Vict. Why, 'tis but a ring.
I'll give it back to you; or, if I keep it,
Will give you gold to buy you twenty such.
Pre. Why would you have this ring?
Vict. A traveller's fancy,
A whim, and nothing more. I would fain keep it
As a memento of the Gipsy camp
In Guadarrama, and the fortune-teller
Who sent me back to wed a widowed maid.
Pray, let me have the ring.
Pre. No, never! never!
I will not part with it, even when I die;
But bid my nurse fold my pale fingers thus,
That it may not fall from them. 'Tis a token
Of a beloved friend, who is no more.
Vict. How? dead?
Pre. Yes; dead to me; and worse than dead.
He is estranged! And yet I keep this ring.
I will rise with it from my grave hereafter,
To prove to him that I was never false.
Vict. [*aside*]. Be still, my swelling heart! one moment, still!
Why, 'tis the folly of a love-sick girl.
Come, give it me, or I will say 'tis mine,
And that you stole it.
Pre. O, you will not dare
To utter such a fiendish lie!
Vict. Not dare?
Look in my face, and say if there is aught
I have not dared, I would not dare for thee!
[*She rushes into his arms.*]
Pre. 'Tis thou! 'tis thou! Yes; yes; my heart's elected!
My dearest-dear Victorian! my soul's heaven!
Where hast thou been so long? Why didst thou leave me?

Vict. Ask me not now, my dearest Preciosa.
Let me forget we ever have been parted!
Pre. Hadst thou not come——
Vict. I pray thee, do not chide me!
Pre. I should have perished here among these Gipsies.
Vict. Forgive me, sweet! for what I made thee suffer.
Think'st thou this heart could feel a moment's joy,
Thou being absent? O, believe it not!
Indeed, since that sad hour I have not slept,
For thinking of the wrong I did to thee!
Dost thou forgive me? Say, wilt thou forgive me?
Pre. I have forgiven thee. Ere those words of anger
Were in the book of Heaven writ down against thee,
I had forgiven thee.
Vict. I'm the veriest fool
That walks the earth, to have believed thee false.
It was the Count of Lara——
Pre. That bad man
Has worked me harm enough. Hast thou not heard——
Vict. I have heard all. And yet speak on, speak on!
Let me but hear thy voice, and I am happy;
For every tone, like some sweet incantation,
Calls up the buried past to plead for me.
Speak, my beloved, speak into my heart,
Whatever fills and agitates thine own.

[*They walk aside.*]

Hyp. All gentle quarrels in the pastoral poets,
All passionate love scenes in the best romances,
All chaste embraces on the public stage,
All soft adventures, which the liberal stars
Have winked at, as the natural course of things,
Have been surpassed here by my friend, the student,
And this sweet Gipsy lass, fair Preciosa!
Pre. Señor Hypolito! I kiss your hand.
Pray, shall I tell your fortune?

Hyp. Not to-night;
or, should you treat me as you did Victorian,
And send me back to marry maids forlorn,
My wedding-day would last from now till Christmas.
Chispa [*within*]. What ho! the Gipsies, ho!
Beltran Cruzado!
Halloo! halloo! halloo! halloo!
[*Enters booted, with a whip and lantern.*]
Vict. What now?
Why such a fearful din? Hast thou been robbed?
Chis. Ay, robbed and murdered; and good evening to you,
My worthy masters.
Vict. Speak; what brings thee here?
Chis. [*to* Preciosa]. Good news from Court; good news! Beltran Cruzado,
The Count of the Calés, is not your father;
But your true father has returned to Spain
Laden with wealth. You are no more a Gipsy.
Vict. Strange as a Moorish tale!
Chis. And we have all
Been drinking at the tavern to your health,
As wells drink in November, when it rains.
Vict. Where is the gentleman?
Chis. As the old song says,

His body is in Segovia,
His soul is in Madrid.

Pre. Is this a dream? O, if it be a dream,
Let me sleep on, and do not wake me yet!
Repeat thy story! Say I'm not deceived!
Say that I do not dream! I am awake;
This is the Gipsy camp; this is Victorian,
And this his friend, Hypolito! Speak! speak!
Let me not wake and find it all a dream!
Vict. It is a dream, sweet child! a waking dream,
A blissful certainty, a vision bright
Of that rare happiness, which even on earth
Heaven gives to those it loves. Now art thou rich,

As thou wast ever beautiful and good;
And I am now the beggar.
Pre. [*giving him her hand*]. I have still
A hand to give.
Chis. [*aside*]. And I have two to take.
I've heard my grandmother say, that Heaven gives almonds
To those who have no teeth. That's nuts to crack.
I've teeth to spare, but where shall I find almonds?
Vict. What more of this strange story?
Chis. Nothing more.
Your friend, Don Carlos, is now at the village
Showing to Pedro Crespo, the Alcalde,
The proofs of what I tell you. The old hag,
Who stole you in her childhood, has confessed;
And probably they will hang her for the crime,
To make the celebration more complete.
Vict. No; let it be a day of general joy;
Fortune comes well to all, that comes not late.
Now let us join Don Carlos.
Hyp. So farewell,
The student's wandering life! Sweet serenades,
Sung under ladies' windows in the night,
And all that makes vacation beautiful!
To you, ye cloistered shades of Alcalá,
To you, ye radiant visions of romance,
Written in books, but here surpassed by truth,
The Bachelor Hypolito returns,
And leaves the Gipsy with the Spanish Student.

SCENE VI.—*A pass in the Guadarrama mountains. Early morning. A muleteer crosses the stage, sitting sideways on his mule, and lighting a paper cigar with flint and steel.*

SONG.

If thou art sleeping, maiden,
Awake and open thy door,
'Tis the break of day, and we must away
O'er meadow, and mount, and moor.

Wait not to find thy slippers,
But come with thy naked feet;
We shall have to pass through the dewy grass,
And waters wide and fleet.

[*Disappears down the pass. Enter a Monk. A Shepherd appears on the rocks above.*]

Monk. Ave Maria, gratia plena. Olá! good man!
Shep. Olá!
Monk. Is this the road to Segovia?
Shep. It is, your reverence.
Monk. How far is it?
Shep. I do not know.
Monk. What is that yonder in the valley?
Shep. San Ildefonso.
Monk. A long way to breakfast.
Shep. Ay, marry.
Monk. Are there robbers in these mountains?
Shep. Yes, and worse than that.
Monk. What?
Shep. Wolves.
Monk. Santa Maria! Come with me to San Ildefonso, and thou shalt be well rewarded.
Shep. What wilt thou give me?
Monk. An Agnus Dei and my benediction.

[*They disappear. A mounted Contrabandista passes, wrapped in his cloak, and a gun at his saddle-bow. He goes down the pass singing.*]

SONG.

Worn with speed is my good steed,
And I march me, hurried, worried;
Onward, caballito mio,
With the white star in thy forehead!
Onward, for here comes the Ronda,
And I hear their rifles crack!
Ay, jaléo! Ay, ay, jaléo!
Ay, jaléo! They cross our track!

[*Song dies away. Enter* Preciosa, *on horseback, attended by* Victorian, Hypolito, Don Carlos, *and* Chispa, *on foot, and armed.*]

Vict. This is the highest point. Here let us rest.
See, Preciosa, see how all about us
Kneeling, like hooded friars, the misty mountains
Receive the benediction of the sun!
O glorious sight!

Pre. Most beautiful indeed!

Hyp. Most wonderful!

Vict. And in the vale below,
Where yonder steeples flash like lifted halberds,
San Ildefonso, from its noisy belfries,
Sends up a salutation to the morn,
As if an army smote their brazen shields,
And shouted victory!

Pre. And which way lies
Segovia?

Vict. At a great distance yonder.
Dost thou not see it?

Pre. No, I do not see it.

Vict. The merest flaw that dents the horizon's edge.
There, yonder!

Hyp. 'Tis a notable old town,
Boasting an ancient Roman aqueduct,
And an Alcázar, builded by the Moors,
Wherein, you may remember, poor Gil Blas
Was fed on *Pan del Rey.* O, many a time
Out of its grated windows have I looked
Hundreds of feet plumb down to the Eresma,
That, like a serpent through the valley creeping,
Glides at its foot.

Pre. O, yes! I see it now,
Yet rather with my heart than with mine eyes,
So faint it is. And, all my thoughts sail thither,
Freighted with prayers and hopes, and forward urged
Against all stress of accident, as, in
The Eastern Tale, against the wind and tide,
Great ships were drawn to the Magnetic Mountains,
And there were wrecked and perished in the sea!

[*She weeps.*]

Vict. O gentle spirit! Thou didst bear unmoved

Blasts of adversity and frosts of fate!
But the first ray of sunshine that falls on thee
Melts thee to tears! O, let thy weary heart
Lean upon mine! and it shall faint no more,
Nor thirst, nor hunger; but be comforted
And filled with my affection.

Pre. Stay no longer!
My father waits. Methinks I see him there,
Now looking from the window, and now watching
Each sound of wheels or footfall in the street,
And saying, "Hark! she comes!" O father! father!

[*They descend the pass.* CHISPA *remains behind.*]

Chis. I have a father, too, but he is a dead one. Alas and alack-a-day! Poor was I born, and poor do I remain. I neither win nor lose. Thus I wag through the world, half the time on foot, and the other half walking: and always as merry as a thunder-storm in the night. And so we plough along, as the fly said to the ox. Who knows what may happen? Patience and shuffle the cards! I am not yet so bald that you can see my brains; and perhaps, after all, I shall some day go to Rome, and come back Saint Peter. Benedicite! [*Exit.*

[*A pause. Then enter* BARTOLOMÉ *wildly, as if in pursuit, with a carbine in his hand.*]

Bart. They passed this way! I hear their horses' hoofs!
Yonder I see them! Come, sweet caramillo,
This serenade shall be the Gipsy's last!

[*Fires down the pass.*]

Ha! ha! Well whistled, my sweet caramillo!
Well whistled!—I have missed her!—O, my God!

[*The shot is returned.* BARTOLOMÉ *falls.*]

EVANGELINE

A TALE OF ACADIE

1847

PREFATORY NOTE

THE story of "EVANGELINE" is founded on a painful occurrence which took place in the early period of British colonization in the northern part of America.

In the year 1713, Acadia, or, as it is now named, Nova Scotia, was ceded to Great Britain by the French. The wishes of the inhabitants seem to have been little consulted in the change, and they with great difficulty were induced to take the oaths of allegiance to the British Government. Some time after this, war having again broken out between the French and British in Canada, the Acadians were accused of having assisted the French, from whom they were descended, and connected by many ties of friendship, with provisions and ammunition, at the siege of Beau Séjour. Whether the accusation was founded on fact or not, has not been satisfactorily ascertained; the result, however, was most disastrous to the primitive, simple-minded Acadians. The British Government ordered them to be removed from their homes, and dispersed throughout the other colonies, at a distance from their much-loved land. This resolution was not communicated to the inhabitants till measures had been matured to carry it into immediate effect; when the Governor of the colony, having issued a summons calling the whole people to a meeting, informed them that their lands, tenements, and cattle of all kinds were forfeited to the British crown, that he had orders to remove them in vessels to distant colonies, and they must remain in custody till their embarkation.

The poem is descriptive of the fate of some of the persons involved in these calamitous proceedings.

THIS is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks,
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight,

Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad and prophetic,
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms.
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neighbouring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the forest.

This is the forest primeval; but where are the hearts that beneath it
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland the voice of the huntsman?
Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Acadian farmers,—
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the woodlands,
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image of heaven?
Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers for ever departed,
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty blasts of October
Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them far over the ocean.
Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village of Grand-Pré.

Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and endures, and is patient,
Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of woman's devotion,
List to the mournful tradition still sung by the pines of the forest;
List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the happy.

PART THE FIRST

I

In the Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin of Minas,
Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand-Pré
Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched to the eastward,
Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks without number.
Dikes, that the hands of the farmer had raised with labour incessant,
Shut out the turbulent tides; but at stated seasons the flood-gates
Opened, and welcomed the sea to wander at will o'er the meadows.
West and south there were fields of flax, and orchards, and cornfields
Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain; and away to the northward
Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on the mountains
Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the mighty Atlantic
Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from their station descended.
There, in the midst of its farm, reposed the Acadian village.
Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak and of chestnut,
Such as the peasants of Normandy built in the reign of the Henries.
Thatched were the roofs, with dormer windows; and gables projecting
Over the basement below protected and shaded the door-way.
There in the tranquil evenings of summer, when brightly the sunset

Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on the chimneys,
Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and in kirtles
Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning the golden
Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttles within doors
Mingled their sound with the whir of the wheels and the songs of the maidens.
Solemnly down the street came the parish priest, and the children
Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended to bless them.
Reverend walked he among them; and up rose matrons and maidens,
Hailing his slow approach with words of affectionate welcome.
Then came the labourers home from the field, and serenely the sun sank
Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon from the belfry
Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs of the village
Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense ascending,
Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace and contentment.
Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian farmers,—
Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike were they free from
Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the vice of republics.
Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their windows;
But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts of the owners;
There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in abundance.

Somewhat apart from the village, and nearer the Basin of Minas,
Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of Grand-Pré,
Dwelt on his goodly acres; and with him, directing his household,
Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride of the village.
Stalworth and stately in form was the man of seventy winters;
Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered with snow-flakes;
White as the snow were his locks, and his cheeks as brown as the oak-leaves.
Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen summers.
Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the thorn by the wayside,
Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the brown shade of her tresses!
Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that feed in the meadows.
When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at noontide
Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah! fair in sooth was the maiden.
Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while the bell from its turret
Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest with his hyssop
Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings upon them,
Down the long street she passed with her chaplet of beads and her missal,
Wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle of blue, and the ear-rings,
Brought in the olden times from France, and since, as an heirloom,
Handed down from mother to child, through long generations.

But a celestial brightness — a more ethereal beauty—
Shone on her face and encircled her form, when, after confession,
Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction upon her.
When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music.
Firmly builded with rafters of oak, the house of the farmer
Stood on the side of a hill commanding the sea; and a shady
Sycamore grew by the door, with a woodbine wreathing around it.
Rudely carved was the porch, with seats beneath; and a footpath
Led through an orchard wide, and disappeared in the meadow.
Under the sycamore-tree were hives overhung by a penthouse,
Such as the traveller sees in regions remote by the road-side,
Built o'er a box for the poor, or the blessed image of Mary.
Farther down, on the slope of the hill, was the well with its moss-grown
Bucket, fastened with iron, and near it a trough for the horses.
Shielding the house from storms, on the north, were the barns and the farm-yard.
There stood the broad-wheeled wains, and the antique ploughs and the harrows;
There were the folds for the sheep; and there, in his feathered seraglio,
Strutted the lordly turkey, and crowed the cock, with the selfsame
Voice that in ages of old had startled the penitent Peter.
Bursting with hay were the barns, themselves a village. In each one

Far o'er the gable projected a roof of thatch ; and a staircase,
Under the sheltering eaves, led up to the odorous corn-loft.
There too the dove-cot stood, with its meek and innocent inmates
Murmuring ever of love ; while above in the variant breezes
Numberless noisy weathercocks rattled and sang of mutation.

Thus, at peace with God and the world, the farmer of Grand-Pré
Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline governed his household.
Many a youth as he knelt in the church and opened his missal,
Fixed his eyes upon her, as the saint of his deepest devotion ;
Happy was he who might touch her hand or the hem of her garment !
Many a suitor came to her door, by the darkness befriended,
And as he knocked, and waited to hear the sound of her footsteps,
Knew not which beat the louder, his heart or the knocker of iron ;
Or at the joyous feast of the Patron Saint of the village,
Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in the dance as he whispered
Hurried words of love, that seemed a part of the music.
But, among all who came, young Gabriel only was welcome ;
Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the blacksmith,
Who was a mighty man in the village, and honoured of all men ;

For since the birth of time, throughout all ages and nations,
Has the craft of the smith been held in repute by the people.
Basil was Benedict's friend. Their children from earliest childhood
Grew up together as brother and sister; and Father Felician,
Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had taught them their letters
Out of the selfsame book, with the hymns of the church and the plain-song.
But when the hymn was sung, and the daily lesson completed,
Swiftly they hurried away to the forge of Basil the blacksmith.
There at the door they stood, with wondering eyes to behold him
Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse as a plaything,
Nailing the shoe in its place; while near him the tire of a cart-wheel
Lay like a fiery snake, coiled round in a circle of cinders.
Oft on autumnal eves, when without in the gathering darkness
Bursting with light seemed the smithy, through every cranny and crevice,
Warm by the forge within they watched the labouring bellows,
And as its panting ceased, and the sparks expired in the ashes,
Merrily laughed, and said they were nuns going into the chapel.
Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the swoop of the eagle,
Down the hill-side bounding, they glided away o'er the meadow.
Oft in the barns they climbed to the populous nests on the rafters,

Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone, which the swallow
Brings from the shore of the sea to restore the sight of its fledglings;
Lucky was he who found that stone in the nest of the swallow!
Thus passed a few swift years, and they no longer were children.
He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the face of the morning,
Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened thought into action.
She was a woman now, with the heart and hopes of a woman.
"Sunshine of Saint Eulalie" was she called; for that was the sunshine
Which, as the farmers believed, would load their orchards with apples;
She, too, would bring to her husband's house delight and abundance,
Filling it full of love, and the ruddy faces of children.

II

Now had the season returned, when the nights grow colder and longer,
And the retreating sun the sign of the Scorpion enters.
Birds of passage sailed through the leaden air, from the ice-bound,
Desolate northern bays to the shores of tropical islands.
Harvests were gathered in; and wild with the winds of September
Wrestled the trees of the forest, as Jacob of old with the angel.
All the signs foretold a winter long and inclement.

Bees, with prophetic instinct of want, had hoarded their honey
Till the hives overflowed; and the Indian hunters asserted
Cold would the winter be, for thick was the fur of the foxes.
Such was the advent of autumn. Then followed that beautiful season,
Called by the pious Acadian peasants the Summer of All-Saints!
Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light; and the landscape
Lay as if new-created in all the freshness of childhood.
Peace seemed to reign upon earth, and the restless heart of the ocean
Was for a moment consoled. All sounds were in harmony blended.
Voices of children at play, the crowing of cocks in the farm-yards,
Whir of wings in the drowsy air, and the cooing of pigeons,
All were subdued and low as the murmurs of love, and the great sun
Looked with the eye of love through the golden vapours around him;
While arrayed in its robes of russet and scarlet and yellow,
Bright with the sheen of the dew, each glittering tree of the forest
Flashed like the plane-tree the Persian adorned with mantles and jewels.

Now recommenced the reign of rest and affection and stillness.
Day with its burden and heat had departed, and twilight descending
Brought back the evening star to the sky, and the herds to the homestead.

Pawing the ground they came, and resting their necks on each other,
And with their nostrils distended inhaling the freshness of evening.
Foremost, bearing the bell, Evangeline's beautiful heifer,
Proud of her snow-white hide, and the ribbon that waved from her collar,
Quietly paced and slow, as if conscious of human affection.
Then came the shepherd back with his bleating flocks from the seaside,
Where was their favourite pasture. Behind them followed the watch-dog,
Patient, full of importance, and grand in the pride of his instinct,
Walking from side to side with a lordly air, and superbly
Waving his bushy tail, and urging forward the stragglers;
Regent of flocks was he when the shepherd slept; their protector,
When from the forest at night, through the starry silence, the wolves howled.
Late, with the rising moon, returned the wains from the marshes,
Laden with briny hay, that filled the air with its odour.
Cheerily neighed the steeds, with dew on their manes and their fetlocks,
While aloft on their shoulders the wooden and ponderous saddles,
Painted with brilliant dyes, and adorned with tassels of crimson,
Nodded in bright array, like hollyhocks heavy with blossoms.
Patiently stood the cows meanwhile, and yielded their udders
Unto the milkmaid's hand; whilst loud, and in regular cadence

Into the sounding pails the foaming streamlets descended.
Lowing of cattle and peals of laughter were heard in the farm-yard,
Echoed back by the barns. Anon they sank into stillness;
Heavily closed, with a jarring sound, the valves of the barn-doors,
Rattled the wooden bars, and all for a season was silent.

In-doors, warm by the wide-mouthed fireplace, idly the farmer
Sat in his elbow chair, and watched how the flames and the smoke-wreaths
Struggled together like foes in a burning city. Behind him,
Nodding and mocking along the wall, with gestures fantastic,
Darted his own huge shadow, and vanished away into darkness.
Faces, clumsily carved in oak, on the back of his arm-chair
Laughed in the flickering light, and the pewter plates on the dresser
Caught and reflected the flame, as shields of armies the sunshine.
Fragments of song the old man sang, and carols of Christmas,
Such as at home, in the olden time, his fathers before him
Sang in their Norman orchards and bright Burgundian vineyards.
Close at her father's side was the gentle Evangeline seated,
Spinning flax for the loom, that stood in the corner behind her.
Silent awhile were its treadles, at rest was its diligent shuttle,

While the monotonous drone of the wheel, like the drone of a bagpipe,
Followed the old man's song, and united the fragments together.
As in a church, when the chant of the choir at intervals ceases,
Footfalls are heard in the aisles, or words of the priest at the altar,
So, in each pause of the song, with measured motion the clock clicked.

Thus, as they sat, there were footsteps heard, and, suddenly lifted,
Sounded the wooden latch, and the door swung back on its hinges.
Benedict knew by the hob-nailed shoes it was Basil the blacksmith,
And by her beating heart Evangeline knew who was with him.
"Welcome!" the farmer exclaimed, as their footsteps paused on the threshold,
"Welcome, Basil, my friend! Come, take thy place on the settle
Close by the chimney-side, which is always empty without thee;
Take from the shelf overhead thy pipe and the box of tobacco;
Never so much thyself art thou as when through the curling
Smoke of the pipe or the forge thy friendly and jovial face gleams
Round and red as the harvest moon through the midst of the marshes."
Then, with a smile of content, thus answered Basil the blacksmith,
Taking with easy air the accustomed seat by the fireside:—
"Benedict Bellefontaine, thou hast ever thy jest and thy ballad!

Ever in cheerfulest mood art thou, when others are filled with
Gloomy forebodings of ill, and see only ruin before them.
Happy art thou, as if every day thou hadst picked up a horseshoe."
Pausing a moment, to take the pipe that Evangeline brought him,
And with a coal from the embers had lighted, he slowly continued:—
"Four days now are passed since the English ships at their anchors
Ride in the Gaspereau's mouth, with their cannon pointed against us.
What their design may be is unknown; but all are commanded
On the morrow to meet in the church, where his Majesty's mandate
Will be proclaimed as law in the land. Alas! in the meantime
Many surmises of evil alarm the hearts of the people."
Then made answer the farmer—"Perhaps some friendlier purpose
Bring these ships to our shores. Perhaps the harvests in England
By the untimely rains or untimelier heat have been blighted,
And from our bursting barns they would feed their cattle and children."
"Not so thinketh the folk in the village," said, warmly, the blacksmith,
Shaking his head, as in doubt; then, heaving a sigh, he continued:—
"Louisburg is not forgotten, nor Beau Séjour, nor Port Royal.
Many already have fled to the forest, and lurk on its outskirts,
Waiting with anxious hearts the dubious fate of to-morrow.

Arms have been taken from us, and warlike
weapons of all kinds;
Nothing is left us but the blacksmith's sledge and
the scythe of the mower."
Then with a pleasant smile made answer the jovial
farmer :—
"Safer are we unarmed, in the midst of our flocks
and our cornfields,
Safer within these peaceful dikes, besieged by the
ocean,
Than were our fathers in forts, besieged by the
enemy's cannon.
Fear no evil, my friend, and to-night may no
shadow of sorrow
Fall on this house and hearth; for this is the night
of the contract.
Built are the house and the barn. The merry lads
of the village
Strongly have built them and well; and, breaking
the glebe round about them,
Filled the barn with hay, and the house with food
for a twelvemonth.
René Leblanc will be here anon, with his papers
and inkhorn.
Shall we not then be glad, and rejoice in the joy
of our children?"
As apart by the window she stood, with her hand
in her lover's,
Blushing Evangeline heard the words that her
father had spoken,
And as they died on his lips the worthy notary
entered.

III

Bent like a labouring oar, that toils in the surf of
the ocean,
Bent, but not broken, by age was the form of the
notary public;

Shocks of yellow hair, like the silken floss of the maize, hung
Over his shoulders; his forehead was high; and glasses with horn bows
Sat astride on his nose, with a look of wisdom supernal.
Father of twenty children was he, and more than a hundred
Children's children rode on his knee, and heard his great watch tick.
Four long years in the times of the war had he languished a captive,
Suffering much in an old French fort as the friend of the English.
Now though warier grown, without all guile or suspicion,
Ripe in wisdom was he, but patient, and simple, and childlike.
He was beloved by all, and most of all by the children;
For he told them tales of the Loup-garou in the forest,
And of the goblin that came in the night to water the horses,
And of the white Létiche, the ghost of a child who unchristened
Died, and was doomed to haunt unseen the chambers of children;
And how on Christmas-eve the oxen talked in the stable,
And how the fever was cured by a spider shut up in a nutshell,
And of the marvellous powers of four-leaved clover and horseshoes,
With whatsoever else was writ in the lore of the village.
Then up rose from his seat by the fireside Basil the blacksmith,
Knocked from his pipe the ashes, and slowly extending his right hand,

"Father Leblanc," he exclaimed, "thou hast heard the talk in the village,
And, perchance, canst tell us some news of these ships and their errand."
Then with modest demeanour made answer the notary public,—
"Gossip enough have I heard, in sooth, yet am never the wiser;
And what their errand may be I know not better than others.
Yet am I not of those who imagine some evil intention
Brings them here, for we are at peace; and why then molest us?"
"God's name!" shouted the hasty and somewhat irascible blacksmith;
"Must we in all things look for the how, and the why, and the wherefore?
Daily injustice is done, and might is the right of the strongest!"
But without heeding his warmth, continued the notary public,—
"Man is unjust, but God is just; and finally justice
Triumphs; and well I remember a story, that often consoled me,
When as a captive I lay in the old French fort at Port Royal."
This was the old man's favourite tale, and he loved to repeat it
When his neighbours complained that any injustice was done them.
"Once in an ancient city, whose name I no longer remember,
Raised aloft on a column, a brazen statue of Justice
Stood in the public square, upholding the scales in its left hand,
And in its right a sword, as an emblem that justice presided

Over the laws of the land, and the hearts and homes of the people.
Even the birds had built their nests in the scales of the balance,
Having no fear of the sword that flashed in the sunshine above them.
But in the course of time the laws of the land were corrupted;
Might took the place of right, and the weak were oppressed, and the mighty
Ruled with an iron rod. Then it chanced in a nobleman's palace
That a necklace of pearls was lost, and ere long a suspicion
Fell on an orphan girl who lived as maid in the household.
She, after form of trial, condemned to die on the scaffold,
Patiently met her doom at the foot of the statue of Justice.
As to her Father in heaven her innocent spirit ascended,
Lo! o'er the city a tempest rose; and the bolts of the thunder
Smote the statue of bronze, and hurled in wrath from its left hand
Down on the pavement below the clattering scales of the balance,
And in the hollow thereof was found the nest of a magpie,
Into whose clay-built walls the necklace of pearls was inwoven."
Silenced, but not convinced, when the story was ended, the blacksmith
Stood like a man who fain would speak, but findeth no language;
All his thoughts were congealed into lines on his face, as the vapours
Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-panes in the winter.

Then Evangeline lighted the brazen lamp on the table,
Filled, till it overflowed, the pewter tankard with home-brewed
Nut-brown ale, that was famed for its strength in the village of Grand-Pré;
While from his pocket the notary drew his papers and inkhorn,
Wrote with a steady hand the date and the age of the parties,
Naming the dower of the bride in flocks of sheep and in cattle.
Orderly all things proceeded, and duly and well were completed,
And the great seal of the law was set like a sun on the margin.
Then from his leathern pouch the farmer threw on the table
Three times the old man's fee in solid pieces of silver;
And the notary rising, and blessing the bride and the bridegroom,
Lifted aloft the tankard of ale and drank to their welfare.
Wiping the foam from his lip, he solemnly bowed and departed;
While in silence the others sat and mused by the fireside,
Till Evangeline brought the draught-board out of its corner.
Soon was the game begun. In friendly contention the old men
Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful manœuvre,
Laughed when a man was crowned, or a breach was made in the king-row.
Meanwhile apart, in the twilight gloom of a window's embrasure,
Sat the lovers, and whispered together, beholding the moon rise

Over the pallid sea and the silvery mist of the meadows.
Silently one by one, in the infinite meadows of heaven,
Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of the angels.

Thus passed the evening away. Anon the bell from the belfry
Rang out the hour of nine, the village curfew, and straightway
Rose the guests and departed; and silence reigned in the household.
Many a farewell word and sweet good-night on the door-step
Lingered long in Evangeline's heart, and filled it with gladness.
Carefully then were covered the embers that glowed on the hearth-stone,
And on the oaken stairs resounded the tread of the farmer.
Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evangeline followed.
Up the staircase moved a luminous space in the darkness,
Lighted less by the lamp than the shining face of the maiden.
Silent she passed through the hall, and entered the door of her chamber.
Simple that chamber was, with its curtains of white, and its clothes-press
Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves were carefully folded
Linen and woollen stuffs, by the hand of Evangeline woven.
This was the precious dower she would bring to her husband in marriage,
Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of her skill as a housewife.

Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the mellow and radiant moonlight
Streamed through the windows and lighted the room, till the heart of the maiden
Swelled and obeyed its power, like the tremulous tides of the ocean.
Ah! she was fair, exceeding fair to behold, as she stood with
Naked snow-white feet on the gleaming floor of her chamber!
Little she dreamed that below, among the trees of the orchard,
Waited her lover and watched for the gleam of her lamp and her shadow.
Yet were her thoughts of him, and at times a feeling of sadness
Passed o'er her soul, as the sailing shade of clouds in the moonlight
Flitted across the floor and darkened the room for a moment.
And as she gazed from the window she saw serenely the moon pass
Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star follow her footsteps,
As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael wandered with Hagar!

IV

Pleasantly rose next morn the sun on the village of Grand-Pré.
Pleasantly gleamed in the soft, sweet air the Basin of Minas,
Where the ships, with their wavering shadows, were riding at anchor.
Life had long been astir in the village, and clamorous labour
Knocked with its hundred hands at the golden gates of the morning.
Now from the country around, from the farms and the neighbouring hamlets,

Came in their holiday dresses the blithe Acadian peasants.
Many a glad good-morrow and jocund laugh from the young folk
Made the bright air brighter, as up from the numerous meadows,
Where no path could be seen but the track of wheels in the greensward,
Group after group appeared, and joined, or passed on the highway.
Long ere noon, in the village all sounds of labour were silenced.
Thronged were the streets with people; and noisy groups at the house-doors
Sat in the cheerful sun, and rejoiced and gossiped together.
Every house was an inn, where all were welcomed and feasted;
For with this simple people, who lived like brothers together,
All things were held in common, and what one had was another's.
Yet under Benedict's roof hospitality seemed more abundant:
For Evangeline stood among the guests of her father;
Bright was her face with smiles, and words of welcome and gladness
Fell from her beautiful lips, and blessed the cup as she gave it.

Under the open sky, in the odorous air of the orchard,
Bending with golden fruit, was spread the feast of betrothal.
There in the shade of the porch were the priest and the notary seated;
There good Benedict sat, and sturdy Basil the blacksmith.

Not far withdrawn from these, by the cider-press and the beehives
Michael the fiddler was placed, with the gayest of hearts and of waistcoats.
Shadow and light from the leaves alternately played on his snow-white
Hair, as it waved in the wind; and the jolly face of the fiddler
Glowed like a living coal when the ashes are blown from the embers.
Gaily the old man sang to the vibrant sound of his fiddle,
Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres, and *Le Carillon de Dunkerque,*
And anon with his wooden shoes beat time to the music.
Merrily, merrily whirled the wheels of the dizzying dances
Under the orchard-trees and down the path to the meadows;
Old folk and young together, and children mingled among them.
Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline, Benedict's daughter!
Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel, son of the blacksmith!

So passed the morning away. And lo! with a summons sonorous
Sounded the bell from its tower, and over the meadows a drum beat.
Thronged ere long was the church with men. Without, in the churchyard,
Waited the women. They stood by the graves, and hung on the headstones
Garlands of autumn-leaves and evergreens fresh from the forest.
Then came the guard from the ships, and marching proudly among them

Entered the sacred portal. With a loud and dissonant clangour
Echoed the sound of their brazen drums from ceiling and casement,—
Echoed a moment only, and slowly the ponderous portal
Closed, and in silence the crowd awaited the will of the soldiers.
Then uprose their commander, and spake from the steps of the altar,
Holding aloft in his hands, with its seals, the royal commission.
"You are convened this day," he said, "by his Majesty's orders.
Clement and kind has he been; but how you have answered his kindness,
Let your own hearts reply! To my natural make and my temper
Painful the task is I do, which to you I know must be grievous.
Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver the will of our monarch;
Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings, and cattle of all kinds,
Forfeited be to the crown; and that you yourselves from this province
Be transported to other lands. God grant you may dwell there
Ever as faithful subjects, a happy and peaceable people!
Prisoners now I declare you; for such is his Majesty's pleasure!"
As, when the air is serene in the sultry solstice of summer,
Suddenly gathers a storm, and the deadly sling of the hailstones
Beats down the farmer's corn in the field and shatters his windows,
Hiding the sun, and strewing the ground with thatch from the house-roofs,

Bellowing fly the herds, and seek to break their inclosures;
So on the hearts of the people descended the words of the speaker.
Silent a moment they stood in speechless wonder, and then rose
Louder and ever louder a wail of sorrow and anger,
And, by one impulse moved, they madly rushed to the door-way.
Vain was the hope of escape; and cries and fierce imprecations
Rang through the house of prayer; and high o'er the heads of the others
Rose, with his arms uplifted, the figure of Basil the blacksmith,
As, on a stormy sea, a spar is tossed by the billows.
Flushed was his face and distorted with passion; and wildly he shouted,—
"Down with the tyrants of England! we never have sworn them allegiance!
Death to these foreign soldiers, who seize on our homes and our harvests!"
More he fain would have said, but the merciless hand of a soldier
Smote him upon the mouth, and dragged him down to the pavement.

In the midst of the strife and tumult of angry contention,
Lo! the door of the chancel opened, and Father Felician
Entered, with serious mien, and ascended the steps of the altar.
Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he awed into silence
All that clamorous throng; and thus he spake to his people.

Deep were his tones and solemn; in accents measured and mournful
Spake he, as, after the tocsin's alarum, distinctly the clock strikes.
"What is this that ye do, my children? what madness has seized you?
Forty years of my life have I laboured among you, and taught you,
Not in word alone, but in deed, to love one another!
Is this the fruit of my toils, of my vigils and prayers and privations?
Have you so soon forgotten all lessons of love and forgiveness?
This is the house of the Prince of Peace, and would you profane it
Thus with violent deeds and hearts overflowing with hatred?
Lo! where the crucified Christ from his cross is gazing upon you!
See! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness and holy compassion!
Hark! how those lips still repeat the prayer, 'O Father, forgive them!'
Let us repeat that prayer in the hour when the wicked assail us,
Let us repeat it now, and say, 'O Father, forgive them!'"
Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in the hearts of his people
Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded that passionate outbreak;
While they repeated his prayer, and said, "O Father, forgive them!"

Then came the evening service. The tapers gleamed from the altar.
Fervent and deep was the voice of the priest, and the people responded,

Not with their lips alone, but their hearts; and the Ave Maria
Sang they, and fell on their knees, and their souls, with devotion translated,
Rose on the ardour of prayer, like Elijah ascending to heaven.

Meanwhile had spread in the village the tidings of ill, and on all sides
Wandered, wailing, from house to house the women and children.
Long at her father's door Evangeline stood, with her right hand
Shielding her eyes from the level rays of the sun, that, descending,
Lighted the village street with mysterious splendour, and roofed each
Peasant's cottage with golden thatch, and emblazoned its windows.
Long within had been spread the snow-white cloth on the table;
There stood the wheaten loaf, and the honey fragrant with wild flowers;
There stood the tankard of ale, and the cheese fresh brought from the dairy;
And at the head of the board the great arm-chair of the farmer.
Thus did Evangeline wait at her father's door, as the sunset
Threw the long shadows of trees o'er the broad ambrosial meadows.
Ah! on her spirit within a deeper shadow had fallen,
And from the fields of her soul a fragrance celestial ascended,—
Charity, meekness, love, and hope, and forgiveness, and patience!
Then, all forgetful of self, she wandered into the village,

Cheering with looks and words the disconsolate hearts of the women,
As o'er the darkening fields with lingering steps they departed,
Urged by their household cares, and the weary feet of their children.
Down sank the great red sun, and in golden, glimmering vapours
Veiled the light of his face, like the Prophet descending from Sinai.
Sweetly over the village the bell of the Angelus sounded.

Meanwhile, amid the gloom, by the church Evangeline lingered.
All was silent within; and in vain at the door and the windows
Stood she, and listened and looked, until, overcome by emotion,
"Gabriel!" cried she aloud with tremulous voice; but no answer
Came from the graves of the dead, nor the gloomier grave of the living.
Slowly at length she returned to the tenantless house of her father.
Smouldered the fire on the hearth, on the board stood the supper untasted,
Empty and drear was each room, and haunted with phantoms of terror.
Sadly echoed her step on the stair and the floor of her chamber.
In the dead of the night she heard the whispering rain fall
Loud on the withered leaves of the sycamore-tree by the window.
Keenly the lightning flashed; and the voice of the echoing thunder
Told her that God was in heaven, and governed the world he created!

Then she remembered the tale she had heard of the justice of heaven;
Soothed was her troubled soul, and she peacefully slumbered till morning.

V

Four times the sun had risen and set; and now on the fifth day
Cheerily called the cock to the sleeping maids of the farm-house.
Soon o'er the yellow fields, in silent and mournful procession,
Came from the neighbouring hamlets and farms the Acadian women,
Driving in ponderous wains their household goods to the sea-shore,
Pausing and looking back to gaze once more on their dwellings,
Ere they were shut from sight by the winding road and the woodland.
Close at their sides their children ran, and urged on the oxen,
While in their little hands they clasped some fragments of playthings.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth they hurried, and there on the sea-beach
Piled in confusion lay the household goods of the peasants.
All day long between the shore and the ships did the boats ply;
All day long the wains came labouring down from the village.
Late in the afternoon, when the sun was near to his setting,
Echoing far o'er the fields came the roll of drums from the churchyard.

Thither the women and children thronged. On a sudden the church-doors
Opened, and forth came the guard, and marching in gloomy procession
Followed the long-imprisoned, but patient, Acadian farmers.
Even as pilgrims, who journey afar from their homes and their country,
Sing as they go, and in singing forget they are weary and way-worn,
So with songs on their lips the Acadian peasants descended
Down from the church to the shore, amid their wives and their daughters.
Foremost the young men came; and, raising together their voices,
Sang they with tremulous lips a chant of the Catholic Missions:—
"Sacred heart of the Saviour! O inexhaustible fountain!
Fill our hearts this day with strength and submission and patience!"
Then the old men, as they marched, and the women that stood by the way-side,
Joined in the sacred psalm, and the birds in the sunshine above them
Mingled their notes therewith, like voices of spirits departed.

Half-way down to the shore Evangeline waited in silence,
Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of affliction,—
Calmly and sadly waited, until the procession approached her,
And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emotion.
Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly running to meet him,

Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his shoulder, and whispered,—
"Gabriel, be of good cheer! for if we love one another,
Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mischances may happen!"
Smiling she spake these words; then suddenly paused, for her father
Saw she slowly advancing. Alas, how changed was his aspect!
Gone was the glow from his cheek, and the fire from his eye, and his footstep
Heavier seemed with the weight of the weary heart in his bosom.
But, with a smile and a sigh, she clasped his neck and embraced him,
Speaking words of endearment where words of comfort availed not.
Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth moved on that mournful procession.

There disorder prevailed, and the tumult and stir of embarking.
Busily plied the freighted boats; and in the confusion
Wives were torn from their husbands, and mothers, too late, saw their children
Left on the land, extending their arms, with wildest entreaties.
So unto separate ships were Basil and Gabriel carried,
While in despair on the shore Evangeline stood with her father.
Half the task was not done when the sun went down, and the twilight
Deepened and darkened around; and in haste the refluent ocean
Fled away from the shore, and left the line of the sand-beach

Covered with waifs of the tide, with kelp and the slippery sea-weed.
Farther back, in the midst of the household goods and the waggons,
Like to a gipsy camp, or a leaguer after a battle,
All escape cut off by the sea, and the sentinels near them,
Lay encamped for the night the houseless Acadian farmers.
Back to its nethermost caves retreated the bellowing ocean,
Dragging adown the beach the rattling pebbles, and leaving
Inland and far up the shore the stranded boats of the sailors.
Then, as the night descended, the herds returned from their pastures;
Sweet was the moist still air with the odour of milk from their udders;
Lowing they waited, and long, at the well-known bars of the farm-yard,—
Waited and looked in vain for the voice and the hand of the milkmaid.
Silence reigned in the streets; from the church no Angelus sounded,
Rose no smoke from the roofs, and gleamed no lights from the windows.

But on the shores meanwhile the evening fires had been kindled,
Built of the drift-wood thrown on the sands from wrecks in the tempest.
Round them shapes of gloom and sorrowful faces were gathered,
Voices of women were heard, and of men, and the crying of children.
Onward from fire to fire, as from hearth to hearth in his parish,

Wandered the faithful priest, consoling and blessing and cheering,
Like unto shipwrecked Paul on Melita's desolate sea-shore.
Thus he approached the place where Evangeline sat with her father,
And in the flickering light beheld the face of the old man,
Haggard and hollow and wan, and without either thought or emotion,
E'en as the face of a clock from which the hands have been taken.
Vainly Evangeline strove with words and caresses to cheer him,
Vainly offered him food; yet he moved not, he looked not, he spake not,
But, with a vacant stare, ever gazed at the flickering fire-light.
"*Benedicite!*" murmured the priest, in tones of compassion.
More he fain would have said, but his heart was full, and his accents
Faltered and paused on his lips, as the feet of a child on the threshold,
Hushed by the scene he beholds, and the awful presence of sorrow.
Silently, therefore, he laid his hand on the head of the maiden,
Raising his eyes, full of tears, to the silent stars that above them
Moved on their way, unperturbed by the wrongs and sorrows of mortals.
Then sat he down at her side, and they wept together in silence.

Suddenly rose from the south a light, as in autumn the blood-red
Moon climbs the crystal walls of heaven, and o'er the horizon

Titan-like stretches its hundred hands upon mountain and meadow,
Seizing the rocks and the rivers, and piling huge shadows together.
Broader and ever broader it gleamed on the roofs of the village,
Gleamed on the sky and the sea, and the ships that lay in the roadstead.
Columns of shining smoke uprose, and flashes of flame were
Thrust through their folds and withdrawn, like the quivering hands of a martyr.
Then as the wind seized the gleeds and the burning thatch, and, uplifting,
Whirled them aloft through the air, at once from a hundred house-tops
Started the sheeted smoke with flashes of flames intermingled.

These things beheld in dismay the crowd on the shore and on ship-board.
Speechless at first they stood, then cried aloud in their anguish,
"We shall behold no more our homes in the village of Grand-Pré!"
Loud on a sudden the cocks began to crow in the farm-yards,
Thinking the day had dawned; and anon the lowing of cattle
Came on the evening breeze, by the barking of dogs interrupted.
Then rose a sound of dread, such as startles the sleeping encampments
Far in the western prairies or forests that skirt the Nebraska,
When the wild horses affrighted sweep by with the speed of the whirlwind,
Or the loud bellowing herds of buffaloes rush to the river.

Such was the sound that arose on the night, as the herds and the horses
Broke through their folds and fences, and madly rushed o'er the meadows.

Overwhelmed with the sight, yet speechless, the priest and the maiden
Gazed on the scene of terror that reddened and widened before them;
And as they turned at length to speak to their silent companion,
Lo! from his seat he had fallen, and stretched abroad on the sea-shore
Motionless lay his form, from which the soul had departed.
Slowly the priest uplifted the lifeless head, and the maiden
Knelt at her father's side, and wailed aloud in her terror.
Then in a swoon she sank, and lay with her head on his bosom.
Through the long night she lay in deep, oblivious slumber;
And when she woke from the trance, she beheld a multitude near her.
Faces of friends she beheld, that were mournfully gazing upon her;
Pallid, with tearful eyes, and looks of saddest compassion.
Still the blaze of the burning village illumined the landscape,
Reddened the sky overhead, and gleamed on the faces around her,
And like the day of doom it seemed to her wavering senses.
Then a familiar voice she heard, as it said to the people,—
"Let us bury him here by the sea. When a happier season

Brings us again to our homes from the unknown land of our exile,
Then shall his sacred dust be piously laid in the churchyard."
Such were the words of the priest. And there in haste by the sea-side,
Having the glare of the burning village for funeral torches,
But without bell or book, they buried the farmer of Grand-Pré.
And as the voice of the priest repeated the service of sorrow,
Lo ! with a mournful sound, like the voice of a vast congregation,
Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled its roar with the dirges.
'Twas the returning tide, that afar from the waste of the ocean,
With the first dawn of the day, came heaving and hurrying landward.
Then recommenced once more the stir and noise of embarking ;
And with the ebb of that tide the ships sailed out of the harbour,
Leaving behind them the dead on the shore, and the village in ruins.

PART THE SECOND

I

Many a weary year had passed since the burning of Grand-Pré,
When on the falling tide the freighted vessels departed,
Bearing a nation, with all its household gods, into exile,
Exile without an end, and without an example in story.

Far asunder, on separate coasts, the Acadians landed;
Scattered were they, like flakes of snow, when the wind from the north-east
Strikes aslant through the fogs that darken the Banks of Newfoundland.
Friendless, homeless, hopeless, they wandered from city to city,
From the cold lakes of the North to sultry Southern savannas,—
From the bleak shores of the sea to the lands where the Father of Waters
Seizes the hills in his hands, and drags them down to the ocean,
Deep in their sands to bury the scattered bones of the mammoth.
Friends they sought and homes; and many, despairing, heart-broken,
Asked of the earth but a grave, and no longer a friend nor a fireside.
Written their history stands on tablets of stone in the churchyards.
Long among them was seen a maiden who waited and wandered,
Lowly and meek in spirit, and patiently suffering all things.
Fair was she and young; but, alas! before her extended,
Dreary and vast and silent, the desert of life, with its pathway
Marked by the graves of those who had sorrowed and suffered before her,
Passions long extinguished, and hopes long dead and abandoned,
As the emigrant's way o'er the Western desert is marked by
Camp-fires long consumed, and bones that bleach in the sunshine.
Something there was in her life incomplete, imperfect, unfinished;

As if a morning of June, with all its music and sunshine,
Suddenly paused in the sky, and, fading, slowly descended
Into the east again, from whence it late had arisen.
Sometimes she lingered in towns, till, urged by the fever within her,
Urged by a restless longing, the hunger and thirst of the spirit,
She would commence again her endless search and endeavour;
Sometimes in churchyards strayed, and gazed on the crosses and ombstones,
Sat by some nameless grave, and thought that perhaps in its bosom
He was already at rest, and she longed to slumber beside him.
Sometimes a rumour, a hearsay, an inarticulate whisper,
Came with its airy hand to point and beckon her forward.
Sometimes she spake with those who had seen her beloved and known him,
But it was long ago, in some far-off place or forgotten.
"Gabriel Lajeunesse!" said they; "O, yes! we have seen him,
He was with Basil the Blacksmith, and both have gone to the prairies;
Coureurs-des-Bois are they, and famous hunters and trappers."
"Gabriel Lajeunesse!" said others; "O, yes! we have seen him.
He is a *Voyageur* in the lowlands of Louisiana."
Then would they say,—"Dear child! why dream and wait for him longer?
Are there not other youths as fair as Gabriel? others
Who have hearts as tender and true, and spirits as loyal?

Here is Baptiste Leblanc, the notary's son, who has loved thee
Many a tedious year; come, give him thy hand and be happy!
Thou art too fair to be left to braid St. Catherine's tresses."
Then would Evangeline answer, serenely but sadly, —"I cannot!
Whither my heart has gone, there follows my hand, and not elsewhere.
For when the heart goes before, like a lamp, and illumines the pathway,
Many things are made clear, that else lie hidden in darkness."
And thereupon the priest, her friend and father-confessor,
Said, with a smile,—"O daughter! thy God thus speaketh within thee!
Talk not of wasted affection, affection never was wasted;
If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters, returning
Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them full of refreshment;
That which the fountain sends forth returns again to the fountain.
Patience; accomplish thy labour; accomplish thy work of affection!
Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endurance is godlike.
Therefore accomplish thy labour of love, till the heart is made godlike,
Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered more worthy of heaven!"
Cheered by the good man's word, Evangeline laboured and waited.
Still in her heart she heard the funeral dirge of the ocean,
But with its sound there was mingled a voice that whispered "Despair not!"

Thus did that poor soul wander in want and cheerless discomfort,
Bleeding, barefooted, over the shards and thorns of existence.
Let me essay, O Muse ! to follow the wanderer's footsteps ;—
Not through each devious path, each changeful year of existence,
But as a traveller follows a streamlet's course through the valley :
Far from its margin at times, and seeing the gleam of its water
Here and there, in some open space, and at intervals only ;
Then drawing nearer its banks, through sylvan glooms that conceal it,
Though he behold it not, he can hear its continuous murmur ;
Happy, at length, if he find the spot where it reaches an outlet.

II

It was the month of May. Far down the beautiful River,
Past the Ohio shore, and past the mouth of the Wabash,
Into the golden stream of the broad and swift Mississippi,
Floated a cumbrous boat, that was rowed by Acadian boatmen.
It was a band of exiles : a raft, as it were, from the shipwrecked
Nation, scattered along the coast, now floating together,
Bound by the bonds of a common belief and a common misfortune ;
Men and women and children, who, guided by hope or by hearsay,
Sought for their kith and their kin among the few-acred farmers

On the Acadian coast, and the prairies of fair Opelousas.
With them Evangeline went, and her guide, the Father Felician.
Onward o'er sunken sands, through a wilderness sombre with forests,
Day after day they glided adown the turbulent river;
Night after night, by their blazing fires, encamped on its borders.
Now through rushing chutes, among green islands, where plumelike
Cotton-trees nodded their shadowy crests, they swept with the current,
Then emerged into broad lagoons, where silvery sand-bars
Lay in the stream, and along the wimpling waves of their margin,
Shining with snow-white plumes, large flocks of pelicans waded.
Level the landscape grew, and along the shores of the river,
Shaded by china-trees, in the midst of luxuriant gardens,
Stood the houses of planters, with negro-cabins and dove-cots.
They were approaching the region where reigns perpetual summer,
Where through the Golden Coast, and groves of orange and citron,
Sweeps with majestic curve the river away to the eastward.
They, too, swerved from their course; and, entering the Bayou of Plaquemine,
Soon were lost in a maze of sluggish and devious waters,
Which, like a network of steel, extended in every direction.
Over their heads the towering and tenebrous boughs of the cypress

Met in a dusky arch, and trailing mosses in mid air
Waved like banners that hang on the walls of ancient cathedrals.
Deathlike the silence seemed, and unbroken, save by the herons
Home to their roosts in the cedar-trees returning at sunset,
Or by the owl, as he greeted the moon with demoniac laughter.
Lovely the moonlight was as it glanced and gleamed on the water,
Gleamed on the columns of cypress and cedar sustaining the arches,
Down through whose broken vaults it fell as through chinks in a ruin.
Dreamlike, and indistinct, and strange were all things around them;
And o'er their spirits there came a feeling of wonder and sadness,—
Strange forebodings of ill, unseen and that cannot be compassed.
As, at the tramp of a horse's hoof on the turf of the prairies,
Far in advance are closed the leaves of the shrinking mimosa,
So, at the hoof-beats of fate, with sad forebodings of evil,
Shrinks and closes the heart, ere the stroke of doom has attained it.
But Evangeline's heart was sustained by a vision, that faintly
Floated before her eyes, and beckoned her on through the moonlight.
It was the thought of her brain that assumed the shape of a phantom.
Through those shadowy aisles had Gabriel wandered before her,
And every stroke of the oar now brought him nearer and nearer.

Then in his place, at the prow of the boat, rose one of the oarsmen,
And, as a signal sound, if others like them peradventure
Sailed on those gloomy and midnight streams, blew a blast on his bugle.
Wild through the dark colonnades and corridors leafy the blast rang,
Breaking the seal of silence, and giving tongues to the forest.
Soundless above them the banners of moss just stirred to the music.
Multitudinous echoes awoke and died in the distance,
Over the watery floor, and beneath the reverberant branches;
But not a voice replied; no answer came from the darkness;
And when the echoes had ceased, like a sense of pain was the silence.
Then Evangeline slept; but the boatmen rowed through the midnight,
Silent at times, then singing familiar Canadian boat-songs,
Such as they sang of old on their own Acadian rivers.
While through the night were heard the mysterious sounds of the desert,
Far off,—indistinct,—as of wave or wind in the forest,
Mixed with the whoop of the crane and the roar of the grim alligator.

Thus ere another noon they emerged from those shades; and before them
Lay, in the golden sun, the lakes of the Atchafalaya.
Water-lilies in myriads rocked on the slight undulations
Made by the passing oars, and, resplendent in beauty, the lotus

Lifted her golden crown above the heads of the boatmen.
Faint was the air with the odorous breath of magnolia blossoms,
And with the heat of noon ; and numberless sylvan islands,
Fragrant and thickly embowered with blossoming hedges of roses,
Near to whose shores they glided along, invited to slumber,
Soon by the fairest of these their weary oars were suspended.
Under the boughs of Wachita willows, that grew by the margin,
Safely their boat was moored ; and scattered about on the greensward,
Tired with their midnight toil, the weary travellers slumbered.
Over them vast and high extended the cope of a cedar.
Swinging from its great arms, the trumpet-flower and the grape-vine
Hung their ladder of ropes aloft like the ladder of Jacob,
On whose pendulous stairs the angels ascending, descending,
Were the swift humming-birds that flitted from blossom to blossom.
Such was the vision Evangeline saw as she slumbered beneath it.
Filled was her heart with love, and the dawn of an opening heaven
Lighted her soul in sleep with the glory of regions celestial.

Nearer and ever nearer, among the numberless islands,
Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o'er the water,

Urged on its course by the sinewy arms of hunters and trappers.
Northward its prow was turned, to the land of the bison and beaver.
At the helm sat a youth, with countenance thoughtful and careworn.
Dark and neglected locks overshadowed his brow, and a sadness
Somewhat beyond his years on his face was legibly written.
Gabriel was it, who, weary with waiting, unhappy and restless,
Sought in the Western wilds oblivion of self and of sorrow.
Swiftly they glided along, close under the lee of the island,
But by the opposite bank, and behind a screen of palmettos,
So that they saw not the boat, where it lay concealed in the willows.
All undisturbed by the dash of their oars, and unseen, were the sleepers;
Angel of God was there none to awaken the slumbering maiden!
Swiftly they glided away, like the shade of a cloud on the prairie.
After the sound of their oars on the tholes had died in the distance,
As from a magic trance the sleepers awoke, and the maiden
Said with a sigh to the friendly priest—"O Father Felician!
Something says in my heart that near me Gabriel wanders.
Is it a foolish dream, an idle and vague superstition?
Or has an angel passed, and revealed the truth to my spirit?"
Then, with a blush, she added,—"Alas for my credulous fancy!

Unto ears like thine such words as these have no meaning."
But made answer the reverend man, and he smiled as he answered,—
"Daughter, thy words are not idle; nor are they to me without meaning.
Feeling is deep and still; and the word that floats on the surface
Is as the tossing buoy, that betrays where the anchor is hidden.
Therefore trust to thy heart, and to what the world calls illusions.
Gabriel truly is near thee; for not far away to the southward,
On the banks of the Têche, are the towns of St. Maur and St. Martin.
There the long-wandering bride shall be given again to her bridegroom,
There the long absent pastor regain his flock and his sheepfold.
Beautiful is the land, with its prairies and forests of fruit-trees;
Under the feet a garden of flowers, and the bluest of heavens
Bending above, and resting its dome on the walls of the forest.
They who dwell there have named it the Eden of Louisiana."

And with these words of cheer they arose and continued their journey.
Softly the evening came. The sun from the western horizon
Like a magician extended his golden wand o'er the landscape;
Twinkling vapours arose; and sky and water and forest
Seemed all on fire at the touch, and melted and mingled together.

Hanging between two skies, a cloud with edges of silver,
Floated the boat, with its dripping oars, on the motionless water.
Filled was Evangeline's heart with inexpressible sweetness.
Touched by the magic spell, the sacred fountains of feeling
Glowed with the light of love, as the skies and waters around her.
Then from a neighbouring thicket the mocking-bird, wildest of singers,
Swinging aloft on a willow spray that hung o'er the water,
Shook from his little throat such floods of delirious music,
That the whole air and the woods and the waves seemed silent to listen.
Plaintive at first were the tones and sad; then soaring to madness
Seemed they to follow or guide the revel of frenzied Bacchantes.
Single notes were then heard, in sorrowful, low lamentation;
Till, having gathered them all, he flung them abroad in derision,
As when, after a storm, a gust of wind through the tree-tops
Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal shower on the branches.
With such a prelude as this, and hearts that throbbed with emotion,
Slowly they entered the Têche, where it flows through the green Opelousas,
And through the amber air, above the crest of the woodland,
Saw the column of smoke that arose from a neighbouring dwelling;—
Sounds of a horn they heard, and the distant lowing of cattle.

III

Near to the bank of the river, o'ershadowed by oaks, from whose branches
Garlands of Spanish moss and of mystic mistletoe flaunted,
Such as the Druids cut down with golden hatchets at Yule-tide,
Stood, secluded and still, the house of the herdsman. A garden
Girded it round about with a belt of luxuriant blossoms,
Filling the air with fragrance. The house itself was of timbers
Hewn from the cypress-tree, and carefully fitted together.
Large and low was the roof; and on slender columns supported,
Rose-wreathed, vine-encircled, a broad and spacious veranda,
Haunt of the humming-bird and the bee, extended around it.
At each end of the house, amid the flowers of the garden,
Stationed the dove-cots were, as love's perpetual symbol,
Scenes of endless wooing, and endless contentions of rivals.
Silence reigned o'er the place. The line of shadow and sunshine
Ran near the tops of the trees; but the house itself was in shadow,
And from its chimney-top, ascending and slowly expanding
Into the evening air, a thin blue column of smoke rose.
In the rear of the house, from the garden gate, ran a pathway
Through the great groves of oak to the skirts of the limitless prairie,

Into whose sea of flowers the sun was slowly descending.
Full in his track of light, like ships with shadowy canvas
Hanging loose from their spars in a motionless calm in the tropics,
Stood a cluster of trees, with tangled cordage of grape-vines.

Just where the woodlands met the flowery surf of the prairie,
Mounted upon his horse, with Spanish saddle and stirrups,
Sat a herdsman, arrayed in gaiters and doublet of deerskin.
Broad and brown was the face that from under the Spanish sombrero
Gazed on the peaceful scene, with the lordly look of its master.
Round about him were numberless herds of kine, that were grazing
Quietly in the meadows, and breathing the vapoury freshness
That uprose from the river, and spread itself over the landscape.
Slowly lifting the horn that hung at his side, and expanding
Fully his broad, deep chest, he blew a blast, that resounded
Wildly and sweet and far, through the still damp air of the evening.
Suddenly out of the grass the long white horns of the cattle
Rose like flakes of foam on the adverse currents of ocean.
Silent a moment they gazed, then bellowing rushed o'er the prairie,
And the whole mass became a cloud, a shade in the distance.

Then, as the herdsman turned to the house, through the gate of the garden
Saw he the forms of the priest and the maiden advancing to meet him.
Suddenly down from his horse he sprang in amazement, and forward
Rushed with extended arms and exclamations of wonder;
When they beheld his face, they recognised Basil the Blacksmith.
Hearty his welcome was, as he led his guests to the garden.
There in an arbour of roses, with endless question and answer,
Gave they vent to their hearts, and renewed their friendly embraces,
Laughing and weeping by turns, or sitting silent and thoughtful.
Thoughtful, for Gabriel came not; and now dark doubts and misgivings
Stole o'er the maiden's heart; and Basil, somewhat embarrassed,
Broke the silence and said,—"If you came by the Atchafalaya,
How have you nowhere encountered my Gabriel's boat on the bayous?"
Over Evangeline's face at the words of Basil a shade passed.
Tears came into her eyes, and she said, with a tremulous accent,—
"Gone? is Gabriel gone?" and, concealing her face on his shoulder,
All her o'erburdened heart gave way, and she wept and lamented.
Then the good Basil said,—and his voice grew blithe as he said it,—
"Be of good cheer, my child; it is only to-day he departed.
Foolish boy! he has left me alone with my herds and my horses.

Moody and restless grown, and tried and troubled, his spirit
Could no longer endure the calm of this quiet existence.
Thinking ever of thee, uncertain and sorrowful ever,
Ever silent, or speaking only of thee and his troubles,
He at length had become so tedious to men and to maidens,
Tedious even to me, that at length I bethought me, and sent him
Unto the town of Adayes to trade for mules with the Spaniards.
Thence he will follow the Indian trails to the Ozark Mountains,
Hunting for furs in the forests, on rivers trapping the beaver.
Therefore be of good cheer; we will follow the fugitive lover;
He is not far on his way, and the Fates and the streams are against him.
Up and away to-morrow, and through the red dew of the morning
We will follow him fast, and bring him back to his prison."

Then glad voices were heard, and up from the banks of the river,
Borne aloft on his comrades' arms, came Michael the fiddler.
Long under Basil's roof had he lived like a god on Olympus,
Having no other care than dispensing music to mortals.
Far renowned was he for his silver locks and his fiddle.
"Long live Michael," they cried, "our brave Acadian minstrel!"

As they bore him aloft in triumphal procession ; and straightway
Father Felician advanced with Evangeline, greeting the old man
Kindly and oft, and recalling the past, while Basil, enraptured,
Hailed with hilarious joy his old companions and gossips,
Laughing loud and long, and embracing mothers and daughters.
Much they marvelled to see the wealth of the ci-devant blacksmith,
All his domains and his herds, and his patriarchal demeanour ;
Much they marvelled to hear his tales of the soil and the climate,
And of the prairies, whose numberless herds were his who would take them ;
Each one thought in his heart, that he, too, would go and do likewise.
Thus they ascended the steps, and, crossing the breezy veranda,
Entered the hall of the house, where already the supper of Basil
Waited his late return ; and they rested and feasted together.

Over the joyous feast the sudden darkness descended.
All was silent without, and, illuming the landscape with silver,
Fair rose the dewy moon and the myriad stars ; but within doors,
Brighter than these, shone the faces of friends in the glimmering lamplight.
Then from his station aloft, at the head of the table, the herdsman
Poured forth his heart and his wine together in endless profusion.

Lighting his pipe, that was filled with sweet Natchitoches tobacco,
Thus he spake to his guests, who listened, and smiled as they listened :—
"Welcome once more, my friends, who so long have been friendless and homeless,
Welcome once more to a home, that is better perchance than the old one!
Here no hungry winter congeals our blood like the rivers;
Here no stony ground provokes the wrath of the farmer.
Smoothly the ploughshare runs through the soil as a keel through the water.
All the year round the orange-groves are in blossom; and grass grows
More in a single night than a whole Canadian summer.
Here, too, numberless herds run wild and unclaimed in the prairies;
Here, too, lands may be had for the asking, and forests of timber
With a few blows of the axe are hewn and framed into houses.
After your houses are built, and your fields are yellow with harvests,
No King George of England shall drive you away from your homesteads,
Burning your dwellings and barns, and stealing your farms and your cattle."
Speaking these words, he blew a wrathful cloud from his nostrils,
While his huge, brawny hand came thundering down on the table,
So that the guests all started; and Father Felician, astounded,
Suddenly paused, with a pinch of snuff half-way to his nostrils.
But the brave Basil resumed, and his words were milder and gayer :—

"Only beware of the fever, my friends, beware of the fever!
For it is not like that of our cold Acadian climate,
Cured by wearing a spider hung round one's neck in a nutshell!"
Then there were voices heard at the door, and footsteps approaching
Sounded upon the stairs and the floor of the breezy veranda.
It was the neighbouring Creoles and small Acadian planters,
Who had been summoned all to the house of Basil the Herdsman.
Merry the meeting was of ancient comrades and neighbours:
Friend clasped friend in his arms; and they who before were as strangers,
Meeting in exile, became straightway as friends to each other,
Drawn by the gentle bond of a common country together.
But in the neighbouring hall a strain of music, proceeding
From the accordant strings of Michael's melodious fiddle,
Broke up all further speech. Away, like children delighted,
All things forgotten beside, they gave themselves to the maddening
Whirl of the dizzy dance, as it swept and swayed to the music,
Dreamlike, with beaming eyes and the rush of fluttering garments.

Meanwhile, apart, at the head of the hall, the priest and the herdsman
Sat, conversing together of past and present and future;
While Evangeline stood like one entranced, for within her

Old memories rose, and loud in the midst of the music
Heard she the sound of the sea, and an irrepressible sadness
Came o'er her heart, and unseen she stole forth into the garden.
Beautiful was the night. Behind the black wall of the forest,
Tipping its summit with silver, arose the moon. On the river
Fell here and there through the branches a tremulous gleam of the moonlight,
Like the sweet thoughts of love on a darkened and devious spirit.
Nearer and round about her the manifold flowers of the garden
Poured out their souls in odours, that were their prayers and confessions
Unto the night, as it went its way, like a silent Carthusian.
Fuller of fragrance than they, and as heavy with shadows and night-dews,
Hung the heart of the maiden. The calm and the magical moonlight
Seemed to inundate her soul with indefinable longings,
As, through the garden gate, beneath the brown shade of the oak-trees,
Passed she along the path to the edge of the measureless prairie.
Silent it lay, with a silvery haze upon it, and fireflies
Gleaming and floating away in mingled and infinite numbers.
Over her head the stars, the thoughts of God in the heavens,
Shone on the eyes of man, who had ceased to marvel and worship,
Save when a blazing comet was seen on the walls of that temple,

As if a hand had appeared and written upon them,
"Upharsin."
And the soul of the maiden, between the stars and
the fire-flies,
Wandered alone, and she cried—"O, Gabriel! O,
my beloved!
Art thou so near unto me, and yet I cannot behold
thee!
Art thou so near unto me, and yet thy voice does
not reach me?
Ah! how often thy feet have trod this path to the
prairie!
Ah! how often thine eyes have looked on the
woodlands around me!
Ah! how often beneath this oak, returning from
labour,
Thou hast lain down to rest, and to dream of me
in thy slumbers!
When shall these eyes behold, these arms be folded
about thee?"
Loud and sudden and near the note of a whippoor-
will sounded
Like a flute in the woods; and anon, through the
neighbouring thickets,
Farther and farther away it floated and dropped
into silence.
"Patience!" whispered the oaks from oracular
caverns of darkness;
And, from the moonlit meadow, a sigh responded,
"To-morrow!"

Bright rose the sun next day; and all the flowers
of the garden
Bathed his shining feet with their tears, and
anointed his tresses
With the delicious balm that they bore in their
vases of crystal.
"Farewell!" said the priest, as he stood at the
shadowy threshold;

"See that you bring us the Prodigal Son from his fasting and famine;
And, too, the Foolish Virgin, who slept when the bridegroom was coming."
"Farewell!" answered the maiden, and, smiling, with Basil descended
Down to the river's bank, where the boatmen already were waiting.
Thus beginning their journey with morning, and sunshine, and gladness,
Swiftly they followed the flight of him who was speeding before them,
Blown by the blast of fate like a dead leaf over the desert.
Not that day, nor the next, nor yet the day that succeeded,
Found they trace of his course, in lake or forest or river;
Nor, after many days, had they found him; but vague and uncertain
Rumours alone were their guides through a wild and desolate country;
Till, at the little inn of the Spanish town of Adayes,
Weary and worn they alighted, and learned from the garrulous landlord,
That on the day before, with horses and guides and companions,
Gabriel left the village, and took the road of the prairies.

IV

Far in the West there lies a desert land, where the mountains
Lift, through perpetual snows, their lofty and luminous summits.
Down from their jagged, deep ravines, where the gorge, like a gateway,

Opens a passage rude to the wheels of the emigrant's waggon,
Westward the Oregon flows and the Walleway and Owyhee.
Eastward, with devious course, among the Wind-river Mountains,
Through the Sweet-water Valley precipitate leaps the Nebraska;
And to the south, from Fontaine-qui-bout and the Spanish sierras,
Fretted with sand and rocks, and swept by the wind of the desert,
Numberless torrents, with ceaseless sound, descend to the ocean,
Like the great chords of a harp, in loud and solemn vibrations.
Spreading between these streams are the wondrous, beautiful prairies,
Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow and sunshine,
Bright with luxuriant clusters of roses and purple amorphas.
Over them wandered the buffalo herds, and the elk and the roebuck;
Over them wandered the wolves, and herds of riderless horses;
Fires that blast and blight, and winds that are weary with travel;
Over them wander the scattered tribes of Ishmael's children,
Staining the desert with blood; and above their terrible war trails
Circles and sails aloft, on pinions majestic, the vulture,
Like the implacable soul of a chieftain slaughtered in battle,
By invisible stairs ascending and scaling the heavens.
Here and there rise smokes from the camps of these savage marauders;

Here and there rise groves from the margins of swift-running rivers;
And the grim, taciturn bear, the anchorite monk of the desert,
Climbs down their dark ravines to dig for roots by the brook-side;
And over all is the sky, the clear and crystalline heaven,
Like the protecting hand of God inverted above them.

Into this wonderful land, at the base of the Ozark Mountains,
Gabriel far had entered, with hunters and trappers behind him.
Day after day, with their Indian guides, the maiden and Basil
Followed his flying steps, and thought each day to o'ertake him.
Sometimes they saw, or thought they saw, the smoke of his camp-fire
Rise in the morning air from the distant plain; but at nightfall,
When they had reached the place, they found only embers and ashes.
And, though their hearts were sad at times and their bodies were weary,
Hope still guided them on, as the magic Fata Morgana
Showed them her lakes of light, that retreated and vanished before them.

Once, as they sat by their evening fire, there silently entered
Into the little camp an Indian woman, whose features
Wore deep traces of sorrow, and patience as great as her sorrow.
She was a Shawnee woman returning home to her people,

From the far-off hunting-grounds of the cruel Camanches,
Where her Canadian husband, a Coureur-des-Bois, had been murdered.
Touched were their hearts at her story, and warmest and friendliest welcome
Gave they, with words of cheer, and she sat and feasted among them
On the buffalo meat and the venison cooked on the embers.
But when their meal was done, and Basil and all his companions,
Worn with the long day's march and the chase of the deer and the bison,
Stretched themselves on the ground, and slept where the quivering fire-light
Flashed on their swarthy cheeks, and their forms wrapped up in their blankets,
Then at the door of Evangeline's tent she sat and repeated
Slowly, with soft, low voice, and the charm of her Indian accent,
All the tale of her love, with its pleasures, and pains, and reverses.
Much Evangeline wept at the tale, and to know that another
Hapless heart like her own had loved and had been disappointed.
Moved to the depths of her soul by pity and woman's compassion,
Yet in her sorrow pleased that one who had suffered was near her,
She in turn related her love and all its disasters.
Mute with wonder the Shawnee sat, and when she had ended
Still was mute; but at length, as if a mysterious horror
Passed through her brain, she spake, and repeated the tale of the Mowis;

Mowis, the bridegroom of snow, who won and wedded a maiden,
But, when the morning came, arose and passed from the wigwam,
Fading and melting away and dissolving into the sunshine,
Till she beheld him no more, though she followed far into the forest.
Then, in those sweet, low tones, that seemed like a weird incantation,
Told she the tale of the fair Lilinau, who was wooed by a phantom,
That, through the pines o'er her father's lodge, in the hush of the twilight,
Breathed like the evening wind, and whispered love to the maiden,
Till she followed his green and waving plume through the forest,
And never more returned, nor was seen again by her people.
Silent with wonder and strange surprise, Evangeline listened
To the soft flow of her magical words, till the region around her
Seemed like enchanted ground, and her swarthy guest the enchantress.
Slowly over the tops of the Ozark Mountains the moon rose,
Lighting the little tent, and with a mysterious splendour
Touching the sombre leaves, and embracing and filling the woodland.
With a delicious sound the brook rushed by, and the branches
Swayed and sighed overhead in scarcely audible whispers.
Filled with the thoughts of love was Evangeline's heart, but a secret,
Subtile sense crept in of pain and indefinite terror,

As the cold, poisonous snake creeps into the nest of the swallow.
It was no earthly fear. A breath from the region of spirits
Seemed to float in the air of night; and she felt for a moment
That, like the Indian maid, she, too, was pursuing a phantom.
And with this thought she slept, and the fear and the phantom had vanished.

Early upon the morrow the march was resumed, and the Shawnee
Said, as they journeyed along,—"On the western slope of these mountains
Dwells in his little village the Black Robe chief of the Mission.
Much he teaches the people, and tells them of Mary and Jesus;
Loud laugh their hearts with joy, and weep with pain as they hear him."
Then, with a sudden and secret emotion, Evangeline answered,—
"Let us go to the Mission, for there good tidings await us!"
Thither they turned their steeds; and behind a spur of the mountains,
Just as the sun went down, they heard a murmur of voices,
And in a meadow green and broad, by the bank of a river,
Saw the tents of the Christians, the tents of the Jesuit Mission.
Under a towering oak, that stood in the midst of the village,
Knelt the Black Robe chief with his children. A crucifix fastened
High on the trunk of the tree, and overshadowed by grape-vines,

Looked with its agonized face on the multitude kneeling beneath it.
This was their rural chapel. Aloft, through the intricate arches
Of its aërial roof, arose the chant of their vespers,
Mingling its notes with the soft susurrus and sighs of the branches.
Silent, with heads uncovered, the travellers, nearer approaching,
Knelt on the swarded floor, and joined in the evening devotions.
But when the service was done, and the benediction had fallen
Forth from the hands of the priest, like seed from the hands of the sower,
Slowly the reverend man advanced to the strangers, and bade them
Welcome; and when they replied, he smiled with benignant expression,
Hearing the homelike sounds of his mother-tongue in the forest,
And with words of kindness conducted them into his wigwam.
There upon mats and skins they reposed, and on cakes of the maize ear
Feasted, and slaked their thirst from the water-gourd of the teacher.
Soon was their story told; and the priest with solemnity answered:—
"Not six suns have risen and set since Gabriel, seated
On this mat by my side, where now the maiden reposes,
Told me this same sad tale; then arose and continued his journey."
Soft was the voice of the priest, and he spake with an accent of kindness;
But on Evangeline's heart fell his words as in winter the snow-flakes

Fall into some lone nest from which the birds have departed.
"Far to the north he has gone," continued the priest; "but in autumn,
When the chase is done, will return again to the Mission."
Then Evangeline said, and her voice was meek and submissive,—
"Let me remain with thee, for my soul is sad and afflicted."
So seemed it wise and well unto all; and betimes on the morrow,
Mounting his Mexican steed, with his Indian guides and companions,
Homeward Basil returned, and Evangeline stayed at the Mission.

Slowly, slowly, slowly the days succeeded each other,—
Days and weeks and months; and the fields of maize that were springing
Green, from the ground when a stranger she came, now waving above her,
Lifted their slender shafts, with leaves interlacing, and forming
Cloisters for mendicant crows and granaries pillaged by squirrels.
Then in the golden weather the maize was husked, and the maidens
Blushed at each blood-red ear, for that betokened a lover,
But at the crooked laughed, and called it a thief in the cornfield.
Even the blood-red ear to Evangeline brought not her lover.
"Patience!" the priest would say; "have faith, and thy prayer will be answered!
Look at this delicate plant that lifts its head from the meadow,

See how its leaves are turned to the north, as true as the magnet;
This is the compass-flower, that the finger of God has planted
Here in the houseless wild, to direct the traveller's journey
Over the sea-like, pathless, limitless waste of the desert.
Such in the soul of man is faith. The blossoms of passion,
Gay and luxuriant flowers, are brighter and fuller of fragrance,
But they beguile us, and lead us astray, and their odour is deadly.
Only this humble plant can guide us here, and hereafter
Crown us with asphodel flowers, that are wet with the dews of nepenthe."

So came the autumn, and passed, and the winter,
—yet Gabriel came not;
Blossomed the opening spring, and the notes of the robin and blue-bird
Sounded sweet upon wold and in wood, yet Gabriel came not.
But on the breath of the summer winds a rumour was wafted
Sweeter than song of bird, or hue or odour of blossom.
Far to the north and east, it said, in the Michigan forests,
Gabriel had his lodge by the banks of the Saginaw river.
And, with returning guides, that sought the lakes of St. Lawrence,
Saying a sad farewell, Evangeline went from the Mission.
When over weary ways, by long and perilous marches,

She had attained at length the depths of the Michigan forests,
Found she the hunter's lodge deserted and fallen to ruin!

Thus did the long sad years glide on, and in seasons and places
Divers and distant far was seen the wandering maiden;—
Now in the tents of grace of the meek Moravian Missions,
Now in the noisy camps and the battle-fields of the army,
Now in secluded hamlets, in towns and populous cities.
Like a phantom she came, and passed away unremembered.
Fair was she and young, when in hope began the long journey;
Faded was she and old, when in disappointment it ended.
Each succeeding year stole something away from her beauty,
Leaving behind it, broader and deeper, the gloom and the shadow.
Then there appeared and spread faint streaks of grey o'er her forehead,
Dawn of another life, that broke o'er her earthly horizon,
As in the eastern sky the first faint streaks of the morning.

V

In that delightful land which is washed by the Delaware's waters,
Guarding in sylvan shades the name of Penn the apostle,
Stands on the banks of its beautiful stream the city he founded.

There all the air is balm, and the peach is the emblem of beauty,
And the streets still re-echo the names of the trees of the forest,
As if they fain would appease the Dryads whose haunts they molested.
There from the troubled sea had Evangeline landed, an exile,
Finding among the children of Penn a home and a country.
There old René Leblanc had died; and when he departed,
Saw at his side only one of all his hundred descendants.
Something at least there was in the friendly streets of the city,
Something that spake to her heart, and made her no longer a stranger;
And her ear was pleased with the Thee and Thou of the Quakers,
For it recalled the past, the old Acadian country,
Where all men were equal, and all were brothers and sisters.
So, when the fruitless search, the disappointed endeavour,
Ended, to recommence no more upon earth, uncomplaining,
Thither, as leaves to the light, were turned her thoughts and her footsteps.
As from a mountain's top the rainy mists of the morning
Roll away, and afar we behold the landscape below us,
Sun-illumined, with shining rivers and cities and hamlets,
So fell the mists from her mind, and she saw the world far below her,
Dark no longer, but all illumined with love; and the pathway
Which she had climbed so far, lying smooth and fair in the distance.

Gabriel was not forgotten. Within her heart was his image,
Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as last she beheld him,
Only more beautiful made by his death-like silence and absence.
Into her thoughts of him time entered not, for it was not.
Over him years had no power; he was not changed, but transfigured;
He had become to her heart as one who is dead, and not absent;
Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to others,
This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow had taught her.
So was her love diffused, but, like to some odorous spices,
Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the air with aroma.
Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but to follow
Meekly, with reverent steps, the sacred feet of her Saviour.
Thus many years she lived as a Sister of Mercy; frequenting
Lonely and wretched roofs in the crowded lanes of the city,
Where distress and want concealed themselves from the sunlight,
Where disease and sorrow in garrets languished neglected.
Night after night, when the world was asleep, as the watchman repeated
Loud, through the gusty streets, that all was well in the city,
High at some lonely window he saw the light of her taper.
Day after day, in the grey of the dawn, as slow through the suburbs

Plodded the German farmer, with flowers and fruits of the market,
Met he that meek, pale face, returning home from its watchings.

Then it came to pass that a pestilence fell on the city,
Presaged by wondrous signs, and mostly by flocks of wild pigeons,
Darkening the sun in their flight, with naught in their craws but an acorn.
And, as the tides of the sea arise in the month of September,
Flooding some silver stream, till it spreads to a lake in the meadow,
So death flooded life, and, o'erflowing its natural margin,
Spread to a brackish lake, the silver stream of existence.
Wealth had no power to bribe, nor beauty to charm, the oppressor;
But all perished alike beneath the scourge of his anger;—
Only, alas! the poor, who had neither friends nor attendants,
Crept away to die in the almshouse, home of the homeless.
Then in the suburbs it stood, in the midst of meadows and woodlands;—
Now the city surrounds it; but still, with its gateway and wicket
Meek, in the midst of splendour, its humble walls seem to echo
Softly the words of the Lord—"The poor ye always have with you."
Thither, by night and by day, came the Sister of Mercy. The dying
Looked up into her face, and thought, indeed, to behold there

Gleams of celestial light encircle her forehead with splendour,
Such as the artist paints o'er the brows of saints and apostles,
Or such as hangs by night o'er a city seen at a distance.
Unto their eyes it seemed the lamps of the city celestial,
Into whose shining gates ere long their spirits would enter.

Thus, on a Sabbath morn, through the streets, deserted and silent,
Wending her quiet way, she entered the door of the almshouse.
Sweet on the summer air was the odour of flowers in the garden;
And she paused on her way to gather the fairest among them,
That the dying once more might rejoice in their fragrance and beauty.
Then, as she mounted the stairs to the corridors, cooled by the east wind,
Distant and soft on her ear fell the chimes from the belfry of Christ Church,
While, intermingled with these, across the meadows were wafted
Sounds of psalms, that were sung by the Swedes in their Church at Wicaco.
Soft as descending wings fell the calm of the hour on her spirit;
Something within her said—"At length thy trials are ended;"
And, with light in her looks, she entered the chambers of sickness.
Noiselessly moved about the assiduous, careful attendants,
Moistening the feverish lip and the aching brow, and in silence

Closing the sightless eyes of the dead, and concealing their faces,
Where on their pallets they lay, like drifts of snow by the road-side.
Many a languid head, upraised as Evangeline entered,
Turned on its pillow of pain to gaze while she passed, for her presence
Fell on their hearts like a ray of the sun on the walls of a prison.
And, as she looked around, she saw how Death, the consoler,
Laying his hand upon many a heart, had healed it for ever.
Many familiar forms had disappeared in the night-time;
Vacant their places were, or filled already by strangers.

Suddenly, as if arrested by fear or a feeling of wonder,
Still she stood, with her colourless lips apart, while a shudder
Ran through her frame, and, forgotten, the flowerets dropped from her fingers,
And from her eyes and cheeks the light and bloom of the morning.
Then there escaped from her lips a cry of such terrible anguish,
That the dying heard it, and started up from their pillows.
On the pallet before her was stretched the form of an old man.
Long, and thin, and grey were the locks that shaded his temples;
But, as he lay in the morning light, his face for a moment
Seemed to assume once more the forms of its earlier manhood;

So are wont to be changed the faces of those who are dying.
Hot and red on his lips still burned the flush of the fever,
As if life, like the Hebrew, with blood had besprinkled its portals,
That the Angel of Death might see the sign, and pass over.
Motionless, senseless, dying, he lay, and his spirit exhausted
Seemed to be sinking down through infinite depths in the darkness,
Darkness of slumber and death, for ever sinking and sinking.
Then through those realms of shade, in multiplied reverberations,
Heard he that cry of pain, and through the hush that succeeded
Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and saint-like,
"Gabriel! O my beloved!" and died away into silence.
Then he beheld, in a dream, once more the home of his childhood;
Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among them,
Village, and mountain, and woodlands; and, walking under their shadow,
As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his vision.
Tears came into his eyes; and as slowly he lifted his eyelids,
Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt by his bedside.
Vainly he strove to whisper her name, for the accents unuttered
Died on his lips, and their motion revealed what his tongue would have spoken.
Vainly he strove to rise; and Evangeline, kneeling beside him,

Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her bosom.
Sweet was the light of his eyes; but it suddenly sank into darkness,
As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a casement.

All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and the sorrow,
All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing,
All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience!
And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her bosom,
Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, "Father, I thank thee!"

Still stands the forest primeval; but far away from its shadow,
Side by side, in their nameless graves, the lovers are sleeping.
Under the humble walls of the little Catholic churchyard,
In the heart of the city, they lie, unknown and unnoticed.
Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside them,
Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at rest and for ever,
Thousands of aching brains, where theirs are no longer busy,
Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have ceased from their labours,
Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have completed their journey!

Still stands the forest primeval; but under the shade of its branches
Dwells another race, with other customs and language.
Only along the shore of the mournful and misty Atlantic
Linger a few Acadian peasants, whose fathers from exile
Wandered back to their native land to die in its bosom.
In the fisherman's cot the wheel and the loom are still busy;
Maidens still wear their Norman caps and their kirtles of homespun,
And by the evening fire repeat Evangeline's story,
While from its rocky caverns the deep-voiced neighbouring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the forest.

THE SEASIDE AND THE FIRESIDE

1849

DEDICATION

As one who, walking in the twilight gloom,
  Hears round about him voices as it darkens,
And seeing not the forms from which they come,
  Pauses from time to time, and turns and hearkens.

So walking here in twilight, O my friends!
  I hear your voices, softened by the distance,
And pause, and turn to listen, as each sends
  His words of friendship, comfort, and assistance.

If any thought of mine, or sung or told,
  Has ever given delight or consolation,
Ye have repaid me back a thousand fold,
  By every friendly sign and salutation.

Thanks for the sympathies that ye have shown!
  Thanks for each kindly word, each silent token,
That teaches me, when seeming most alone,
  Friends are around us, though no word be spoken.

Kind messages that pass from land to land;
  Kind letters, that betray the heart's deep history,
In which we feel the pressure of a hand,—
  One touch of fire,—and all the rest is mystery!

The pleasant books, that silently among
Our household treasures take familiar places,
And are to us as if a living tongue
Spake from the printed leaves or pictured faces!

Perhaps on earth I never shall behold,
With eye of sense, your outward form and semblance;
Therefore to me ye never will grow old,
But live for ever young in my remembrance.

Never grow old, nor change, nor pass away!
Your gentle voices will flow on for ever,
When life grows bare and tarnished with decay,
As through a leafless landscape flows a river.

Not chance of birth or place has made us friends,
Being oftentimes of different tongues and nations,
But the endeavour for the selfsame ends,
With the same hopes, and fears, and aspirations.

Therefore I hope to join your seaside walk,
Saddened, and mostly silent, with emotion;
Not interrupting with intrusive talk
The grand, majestic symphonies of ocean.

Therefore I hope, as no unwelcome guest,
At your warm fireside, when the lamps are lighted,
To have my place reserved among the rest,
Nor stand as one unsought and uninvited!

BY THE SEASIDE

THE BUILDING OF THE SHIP

"Build me straight, O worthy Master!
Staunch and strong, a goodly vessel,
That shall laugh at all disaster,
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle!"

The merchant's word
Delighted the Master heard;
For his heart was in his work, and the heart
Giveth grace unto every Art.
A quiet smile played round his lips,
As the eddies and dimples of the tide
Play round the bows of ships,
That steadily at anchor ride.
And with a voice that was full of glee,
He answered, "Ere long we will launch
A vessel as goodly, and strong, and staunch,
As ever weathered a wintry sea!"

And first with nicest skill and art,
Perfect and finished in every part,
A little model the Master wrought,
Which should be to the larger plan
What the child is to the man,
Its counterpart in miniature;
That with a hand more swift and sure
The greater labour might be brought
To answer to his inward thought.
And as he laboured, his mind ran o'er
The various ships that were built of yore,
And above them all, and strangest of all,
Towered the *Great Harry,* crank and tall,
Whose picture was hanging on the wall,
With bows and stern raised high in air,
And balconies hanging here and there,
And signal lanterns and flags afloat,
And eight round towers, like those that frown
From some old castle, looking down
Upon the drawbridge and the moat.
And he said with a smile, "Our ship, I wis,
Shall be of another form than this!"

It was of another form, indeed;
Built for freight, and yet for speed,
A beautiful and gallant craft;
Broad in the beam, that the stress of the blast,
Pressing down upon sail and mast,

Might not the sharp bows overwhelm ;
Broad in the beam, but sloping aft
With graceful curve and slow degrees,
That she might be docile to the helm,
And that the currents of parted seas,
Closing behind, with mighty force,
Might aid and not impede her course.

In the ship-yard stood the Master,
With the model of the vessel,
That should laugh at all disaster,
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle !

Covering many a rood of ground,
Lay the timber piled around ;
Timber of chestnut, and elm, and oak.
And scattered here and there, with these,
The knarred and crooked cedar knees ;
Brought from regions far away,
From Pascagoula's sunny bay,
And the banks of the roaring Roanoke !
Ah ! what a wondrous thing it is
To note how many wheels of toil
One thought, one word, can set in motion !
There's not a ship that sails the ocean,
But every climate, every soil,
Must bring its tribute, great or small,
And help to build the wooden wall !

The sun was rising o'er the sea,
And long the level shadows lay,
As if they, too, the beams would be
Of some great, airy argosy,
Framed and launched in a single day.
That silent architect, the sun,
Had hewn and laid them every one,
Ere the work of man was yet begun.
Beside the Master, when he spoke,
A youth, against an anchor leaning,
Listened to catch his slightest meaning.

Only the long waves, as they broke
In ripples on the pebbly beach,
Interrupted the old man's speech.
Beautiful they were, in sooth,
The old man and the fiery youth!
The old man, in whose busy brain
Many a ship that sailed the main
Was modelled o'er and o'er again;—
The fiery youth, who was to be
The heir of his dexterity,
The heir of his house, and his daughter's hand,
When he had built and launched from land
What the elder head had planned.

"Thus," said he, "will we build this ship!
Lay square the blocks upon the slip,
And follow well this plan of mine.
Choose the timbers with greatest care;
Of all that is unsound beware;
For only what is sound and strong
To this vessel shall belong.
Cedar of Maine and Georgia pine
Here together shall combine.
A goodly frame, and a goodly fame,
And the UNION be her name!
For the day that gives her to the sea
Shall give my daughter unto thee!"

The Master's word
Enraptured the young man heard;
And as he turned his face aside,
With a look of joy and a thrill of pride,
Standing before
Her father's door,
He saw the form of his promised bride.
The sun shone on her golden hair,
And her cheek was glowing fresh and fair,
With the breath of morn and the soft sea air.
Like a beauteous barge was she,

Still at rest on the sandy beach,
Just beyond the billow's reach ;
But he,
Was the restless, seething, stormy sea !

Ah, how skilful grows the hand
That obeyeth Love's command !
It is the heart, and not the brain,
That to the highest doth attain,
And he who followeth Love's behest
Far exceedeth all the rest !

Thus with the rising of the sun
Was the noble task begun,
And soon throughout the ship-yard's bounds
Were heard the intermingled sounds
Of axes and of mallets, plied
With vigorous arms on every side ;
Plied so deftly and so well,
That ere the shadows of evening fell,
The keel of oak for a noble ship,
Scarfed and bolted, straight and strong,
Was lying ready, and stretched along
The blocks, well placed upon the slip.
Happy, thrice happy, every one
Who sees his labours well begun,
And not perplexed and multiplied,
By idly waiting for time and tide !

And when the hot, long day was o'er,
The young Man at the Master's door
Sat with the maiden calm and still.
And within the porch, a little more
Removed beyond the evening chill,
The father sat, and told them tales
Of wrecks in the great September gales,
Of pirates upon the Spanish Main,
And ships that never came back again ;
The chance and change of a sailor's life,
Want and plenty, rest and strife,

His roving fancy, like the wind,
That nothing can stay and nothing can bind;
And the magic charm of foreign lands,
With shadows of palms, and shining sands,
Where the tumbling surf,
O'er the coral reefs of Madagascar,
Washes the feet of the swarthy Lascar,
As he lies alone and asleep on the turf.

And the trembling maiden held her breath
At the tales of that awful, pitiless sea,
With all its terror and mystery,
The dim, dark sea, so like unto Death,
That divides, and yet unites, mankind!
And whenever the old man paused, a gleam
From the bowl of his pipe would awhile illume
The silent group in the twilight gloom,
And thoughtful faces, as in a dream;
And for a moment one might mark
What had been hidden by the dark,
That the head of the maiden lay at rest,
Tenderly, on the young man's breast!

Day by day the vessel grew,
With timbers fashioned strong and true,
Stemson and keelson and sternson-knee,
Till, framed with perfect symmetry,
A skeleton ship rose up to view!
And around the bows and along the side
The heavy hammers and mallets plied,
Till after many a week, at length,
Wonderful for form and strength,
Sublime in its enormous bulk,
Loomed aloft the shadowy hulk!
And around it columns of smoke, upwreathing,
Rose from the boiling, bubbling, seething
Caldron, that glowed,
And overflowed
With the black tar, heated for the sheathing.

And amid the clamours
Of clattering hammers,
He who listened heard now and then
The song of the Master and his men :—
"Build me straight, O worthy Master,
Staunch and strong, a goodly vessel,
That shall laugh at all disaster,
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle!"

With oaken brace and copper band,
Lay the rudder on the sand,
That, like a thought, should have control,
Over the movement of the whole;
And near it the anchor, whose giant hand
Would reach down and grapple with the land,
And immoveable and fast
Hold the great ship against the bellowing blast!
And at the bows an image stood,
By a cunning artist carved in wood,
With robes of white, that far behind
Seemed to be fluttering in the wind.
It was not shaped in a classic mould,
Not like a Nymph or Goddess of old,
Or Naiad rising from the water,
But modelled from the Master's daughter!
On many a dreary and misty night,
'Twill be seen by the rays of the signal light,
Speeding along through the rain and the dark,
Like a ghost in its snow-white sark,
The pilot of some phantom bark,
Guiding the vessel, in its flight,
By a path none other knows aright!
Behold, at last,[1]
Each tall and tapering mast

[1] I wish to anticipate a criticism on this passage by stating, that sometimes, though not usually, vessels are launched fully rigged and sparred. I have availed myself of the exception, as better suited to my purposes than the general rule; but the reader will see that it is neither a

Is swung into its place;
Shrouds and stays
Holding it firm and fast!

Long ago,
In the deer-haunted forests of Maine,
When upon mountain and plain
Lay the snow,
They fell,—those lordly pines!
Those grand, majestic pines!
'Mid shouts and cheers
The jaded steers,
Panting beneath the goad,
Dragged down the weary, winding road
Those captive kings so straight and tall,
To be shorn of their streaming hair,
And, naked and bare,
To feel the stress and the strain
Of the wind and the reeling main,
Whose roar
Would remind them for evermore
Of their native forests they should not see again.
And everywhere
The slender, graceful spars
Poise aloft in the air,
And at the mast head,
White, blue, and red,
A flag unrolls the stripes and stars.
Ah! when the wanderer, lonely, friendless,
In foreign harbours shall behold
That flag unrolled,

blunder nor a poetic licence. On this subject a friend in Portland, Maine, writes me thus:—

"In this State, and also, as I am told, in New York, ships are sometimes rigged upon the stocks, in order to save time, or to make a show. There was a fine, large ship launched last summer at Ellsworth, fully rigged and sparred. Some years ago a ship was launched here, with her rigging, spars, sails, and cargo aboard. She sailed the next day, and—was never heard of again. I hope this will not be the fate of your poem!"

'Twill be as a friendly hand
Stretched out from his native land,
Filling his heart with memories sweet and endless!

All is finished! and at length
Has come the bridal day
Of beauty and of strength.
To-day the vessel shall be launched!
With fleecy clouds the sky is blanched,
And o'er the bay,
Slowly, in all his splendours dight,
The great sun rises to behold the sight.
The ocean old,
Centuries old,
Strong as youth, and as uncontrolled,
Paces restless to and fro,
Up and down the sands of gold.
His beating heart is not at rest;
And far and wide,
With ceaseless flow,
His beard of snow
Heaves with the heaving of his breast.

He waits impatient for his bride.
There she stands,
With her foot upon the sands,
Decked with flags and streamers gay,
In honour of her marriage day,
Her snow-white signals, fluttering, blending,
Round her like a veil descending,
Ready to be
The bride of the grey old sea.

On the deck another bride
Is standing by her lover's side.
Shadows from the flags and shrouds,
Like the shadows cast by clouds,
Broken by many a sunny fleck,
Fall around them on the deck.

The prayer is said,
The service read,
The joyous bridegroom bows his head,
And in tears the good old Master
Shakes the brown hand of his son,
Kisses his daughter's glowing cheek
In silence, for he cannot speak,
And ever faster
Down his own the tears begin to run.
The worthy pastor—
The shepherd of that wandering flock,
That has the ocean for its wold,
That has the vessel for its fold,
Leaping ever from rock to rock—
Spake, with accents mild and clear,
Words of warning, words of cheer,
But tedious to the bridegroom's ear.
He knew the chart
Of the sailor's heart,
All its pleasures and its griefs,
All its shallows and rocky reefs,
All those secret currents, that flow
With such resistless undertow,
And lift and drift, with terrible force,
The will from its moorings and its course.
Therefore he spake, and thus said he:—

"Like unto ships far off at sea,
Outward or homeward bound, are we.
Before, behind, and all around,
Floats and swings the horizon's bound,
Seems at its distant rim to rise
And climb the crystal wall of the skies,
And then again to turn and sink,
As if we could slide from its outer blink.
Ah! it is not the sea,
It is not the sea that sinks and shelves,
But ourselves
That rock and rise
With endless and uneasy motion,

Now touching the very skies,
Now sinking into the depths of ocean.
Ah! if our souls but poise and swing
Like the compass in its brazen ring,
Ever level, and ever true
To the toil and the task we have to do,
We shall sail securely, and safely reach
The Fortunate Isles, on whose shining beach
The sights we see, and the sounds we hear,
Will be those of joy and not of fear!"

Then the Master,
With a gesture of command,
Waved his hand;
And at the word,
Loud and sudden there was heard,
All around them and below,
The sound of hammers, blow on blow,
Knocking away the shores and spurs.
And see! she stirs!
She starts,—she moves,—she seems to feel
The thrill of life along her keel,
And, spurning with her foot the ground,
With one exulting, joyous bound,
She leaps into the ocean's arms!
And lo! from the assembled crowd
There rose a shout, prolonged and loud,
That to the ocean seemed to say,—
"Take her, O bridegroom, old and grey,
Take her to thy protecting arms,
With all her youth and all her charms!"

How beautiful she is! How fair
She lies within those arms that press
Her form with many a soft caress
Of tenderness and watchful care!
Sail forth into the sea, O ship!
Through wind and wave, right onward steer!
The moistened eye, the trembling lip,
Are not the signs of doubt or fear.

Sail forth into the sea of life,
O gentle, loving, trusting wife,
And safe from all adversity
Upon the bosom of that sea
Thy comings and thy goings be!
For gentleness and love and trust
Prevail o'er angry wave and gust;
And in the wreck of noble lives
Something immortal still survives!

Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State!
Sail on, O UNION, strong and great!
Humanity, with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!
We know what Master laid thy keel,
What Workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,
Who made each mast, and sail, and rope,
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
In what a forge and what a heat
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope!

Fear not each sudden sound and shock,
'Tis of the wave and not the rock;
'Tis but the flapping of the sail,
And not a rent made by the gale!
In spite of rock and tempest's roar,
In spite of false lights on the shore,
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!
Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee,
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee,—are all with thee!

TWILIGHT

THE twilight is sad and cloudy,
The wind blows wild and free,
And like the wings of sea-birds
Flash the white caps of the sea.

But in the fisherman's cottage
There shines a ruddier light,
And a little face at the window
Peers out into the night.

Close, close it is pressed to the window,
As if those childish eyes
Were looking into the darkness,
To see some form arise.

And a woman's waving shadow
Is passing to and fro,
Now rising to the ceiling,
Now bowing and bending low.

What tale do the roaring ocean,
And the night-wind, bleak and wild,
As they beat at the crazy casement,
Tell to that little child?

And why do the roaring ocean,
And the night-wind, wild and bleak,
As they beat at the heart of the mother,
Drive the colour from her cheek?

THE FIRE OF DRIFT-WOOD[1]

We sat within the farm-house old,
Whose windows, looking o'er the bay,
Gave to the sea-breeze, damp and cold,
An easy entrance, night and day.

Not far away we saw the port,—
The strange, old-fashioned, silent town,—
The lighthouse, the dismantled fort,
The wooden houses quaint and brown.

[1] Suggested by one seen by the poet at Devereux Farm, Marblehead.

We sat and talked until the night,
Descending, filled the little room;
Our faces faded from the sight,
Our voices only broke the gloom.

We spake of many a vanished scene,
Of what we once had thought and said,
Of what had been, and might have been,
And who was changed, and who was dead;

And all that fills the hearts of friends,
When first they feel, with secret pain,
Their lives thenceforth have separate ends,
And never can be one again;

The first slight swerving of the heart,
That words are powerless to express,
And leave it still unsaid in part,
Or say it in too great excess.

The very tones in which we spake
Had something strange, I could but mark;
The leaves of memory seemed to make
A mournful rustling in the dark.

Oft died the words upon our lips,
As suddenly, from out the fire
Built of the wreck of stranded ships,
The flames would leap and then expire.

And, as their splendour flashed and failed,
We thought of wrecks upon the main,—
Of ships dismasted, that were hailed
And sent no answer back again.

The windows, rattling in their frames,—
The ocean, roaring up the beach,—
The gusty blast,—the bickering flames,—
All mingled vaguely in our speech;

Until they made themselves a part
Of fancies floating through the brain,—
The long-lost ventures of the heart,
That send no answers back again.

O flames that glowed! O hearts that yearned!
They were indeed too much akin,
The drift-wood fire without that burned,
The thoughts that burned and glowed within.

THE LIGHTHOUSE

The rocky ledge runs far into the sea,
And on its outer point, some miles away,
The Lighthouse lifts its massive masonry,
A pillar of fire by night, of cloud by day.

Even at this distance I can see the tides,
Upheaving, break unheard along its base,
A speechless wrath, that rises and subsides
In the white lip and tremor of the face.

And as the evening darkens, lo! how bright,
Through the deep purple of the twilight air,
Beams forth the sudden radiance of its light
With strange, unearthly splendour in its glare!

Not one alone; from each projecting cape
And perilous reef along the ocean's verge,
Starts into life a dim, gigantic shape,
Holding its lantern o'er the restless surge.

Like the great giant Christopher, it stands
Upon the brink of the tempestuous wave,
Wading far out among the rocks and sands,
The night-o'ertaken mariner to save.

And the great ships sail outward and return,
Bending and bowing o'er the billowy swells,
And ever joyful, as they see it burn,
They wave their silent welcomes and farewells.

They come forth from the darkness, and their sails
Gleam for a moment only in the blaze,
And eager faces, as the light unveils,
Gaze at the tower, and vanish while they gaze.

The mariner remembers when a child,
On his first voyage, he saw it fade and sink;
And when, returning from adventures wild,
He saw it rise again o'er ocean's brink.

Steadfast, serene, immoveable, the same
Year after year, through all the silent night
Burns on for evermore that quenchless flame,
Shines on that inextinguishable light!

It sees the ocean to its bosom clasp
The rocks and sea-sand with the kiss of peace;
It sees the wild winds lift it in their grasp,
And hold it up, and shake it like a fleece.

The startled waves leap over it; the storm
Smites it with all the scourges of the rain,
And steadily against its solid form
Press the great shoulders of the hurricane.

The sea-bird wheeling round it, with the din
Of wings and winds and solitary cries,
Blinded and maddened by the light within,
Dashes himself against the glare, and dies.

A new Prometheus, chained upon the rock,
Still grasping in his hand the fire of Jove,
It does not hear the cry, nor heed the shock,
But hails the mariner with words of love.

"Sail on!" it says, "sail on, ye stately ships!
And with your floating bridge the ocean span;
Be mine to guard this light from all eclipse,
Be yours to bring man nearer unto man!"

SIR HUMPHREY GILBERT[1]

Southward with fleet of ice
Sailed the corsair Death;
Wild and fast blew the blast,
And the east-wind was his breath.

His lordly ships of ice
Glistened in the sun;
On each side, like pennons wide,
Flashing crystal streamlets run.

His sails of white sea-mist
Dripped with silver rain;
But where he passed there were cast
Leaden shadows o'er the main.

Eastward from Campobello
Sir Humphrey Gilbert sailed;
Three days or more seaward he bore,
Then, alas! the land-wind failed.

[1] "When the wind abated and the vessels were near enough, the Admiral was seen constantly sitting in the stern, with a book in his hand. On the 9th of September he was seen for the last time, and was heard by the people of the Hind to say, 'We are as near heaven by sea as by land.' In the following night the lights of the ship suddenly disappeared. The people in the other vessel kept a good lookout for him during the remainder of the voyage. On the 22nd of September they arrived, through much tempest and peril, at Falmouth. But nothing more was seen or heard of the Admiral."—Belknap's *American Biography*, i. 203.

Alas! the land-wind failed,
And ice-cold grew the night;
And never more, on sea or shore,
Should Sir Humphrey see the light.

He sat upon the deck,
The Book was in his hand;
"Do not fear! Heaven is near,"
He said, "by water as by land!"

In the first watch of the night,
Without a signal's sound,
Out of the sea, mysteriously,
The fleet of Death rose all around.

The moon and the evening star
Were hanging in the shrouds;
Every mast, as it passed,
Seemed to rake the passing clouds.

They grappled with their prize,
At midnight black and cold!
As of a rock was the shock;
Heavily the ground-swell rolled.

Southward through day and dark,
They drift in close embrace,
With mist and rain o'er the open main;
Yet there seems no change of place.

Southward, for ever southward,
They drift through dark and day;
And like a dream in the Gulf-stream
Sinking, vanish all away.

THE SECRET OF THE SEA

Ah! what pleasant visions haunt me
As I gaze upon the sea!
All the old romantic legends,
All my dreams, come back to me.

Sails of silk and ropes of sendal,
Such as gleam in ancient lore;
And the singing of the sailors,
And the answer from the shore!

Most of all, the Spanish ballad
Haunts me oft, and tarries long,
Of the noble Count Arnaldos
And the sailor's mystic song.

Like the long waves on a sea-beach,
Where the sand as silver shines,
With a soft monotonous cadence,
Flow its unrhymed lyric lines;—

Telling how the Count Arnaldos,[1]
With his hawk upon his hand,
Saw a fair and stately galley,
Steering onward to the land;—

How he heard the ancient helmsman
Chant a song so wild and clear,
That the sailing sea-bird slowly
Poised upon the mast to hear,

Till his soul was full of longing,
And he cried with impulse strong,—
"Helmsman! for the love of heaven,
Teach me, too, that wondrous song!"

[1] See Lockhart's *Spanish Ballads*.

"Wouldst thou," so the helmsman answered,
"Learn the secrets of the sea?
Only those who brave its dangers
Comprehend its mystery!"

In each sail that skims the horizon,
In each landward-blowing breeze,
I behold that stately galley,
Hear those mournful melodies;

Till my soul is full of longing
For the secret of the sea,
And the heart of the great ocean
Sends a thrilling pulse through me.

THE EVENING STAR

Just above yon sandy bar,
As the day grows fainter and dimmer,
Lonely and lovely, a single star
Lights the air with a dusky glimmer.

Into the ocean faint and far
Falls the trail of its golden splendour,
And the gleam of that single star
Is ever refulgent, soft, and tender.

Chrysaor, rising out of the sea,
Showed thus glorious and thus emulous,
Leaving the arms of Callirrhoe,
For ever tender, soft, and tremulous.

Thus o'er the ocean faint and far
Trailed the gleam of his falchion brightly.
Is it a God, or is it a star,
That, entranced, I gazed on nightly.

BY THE FIRESIDE

RESIGNATION

There is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there!
There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But has one vacant chair!

The air is full of farewells to the dying,
And mournings for the dead;
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
Will not be comforted!

Let us be patient! These severe afflictions
Not from the ground arise,
But oftentimes celestial benedictions
Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapours;
Amid these earthly damps,
What seem to us but sad, funereal tapers,
May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no death! What seems so is transition.
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
Whose portal we call Death.

She is not dead,—the child of our affection,—
But gone unto that school
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,
By guardian angels led,
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
She lives, whom we call dead.

Day after day we think what she is doing
In those bright realms of air;
Year after year her tender steps pursuing,
Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken
The bond which nature gives,
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,
May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her;
For when with raptures wild
In our embraces we again enfold her,
She will not be a child;

But a fair maiden, in her Father's mansion,
Clothed with celestial grace;
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
Shall we behold her face.

And though at times, impetuous with emotion
And anguish long suppressed,
The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,
That cannot be at rest,—

We will be patient, and assuage the feeling
We may not wholly stay;
By silence sanctifying, not concealing,
The grief that must have way.

THE BUILDERS

All are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time;
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.

Nothing useless is, or low;
Each thing in its place is best;
And what seems but idle show,
Strengthens and supports the rest.

For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled;
Our to-days and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.

Truly shape and fashion these;
Leave no yawning gaps between;
Think not, because no man sees,
Such things will remain unseen.

In the elder days of Art,
Builders wrought with greatest care,
Each minute and unseen part;
For the Gods see everywhere.

Let us do our work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen;
Make the house, where Gods may dwell,
Beautiful, entire, and clean.

Else our lives are incomplete,
Standing in these walls of Time,
Broken stairways, where the feet
Stumble as they seek to climb.

Build to-day, then, strong and sure,
With a firm and ample base;
And ascending and secure
Shall to-morrow find its place.

Thus alone can we attain
To those turrets, where the eye
Sees the world as one vast plain,
And one boundless reach of sky.

SAND OF THE DESERT IN AN HOUR-GLASS

A HANDFUL of red sand, from the hot clime
Of Arab deserts brought,
Within this glass becomes the spy of Time,
The minister of Thought.

How many weary centuries has it been
About those deserts blown!
How many strange vicissitudes has seen,
How many histories known!

Perhaps the camels of the Ishmaelite
Trampled and passed it o'er,
When into Egypt from the patriarch's sight
His favourite son they bore.

Perhaps the feet of Moses, burnt and bare,
Crushed it beneath their tread;
Or Pharaoh's flashing wheels into the air
Scattered it as they sped;

Or Mary, with the Christ of Nazareth
Held close in her caress,
Whose pilgrimage of hope and love and faith
Illumed the wilderness;

Or anchorites beneath Engaddi's palms
Pacing the Dead Sea beach,
And singing slow their old Armenian psalms
In half-articulate speech;

Or caravans, that from Bassora's gate
With westward steps depart;
Or Mecca's pilgrims, confident of Fate,
And resolute in heart!

These have passed over it, or may have passed!
Now in this crystal tower
Imprisoned by some curious hand at last,
It counts the passing hour.

And as I gaze, these narrow walls expand;—
Before my dreamy eye
Stretches the desert with its shifting sand,
Its unimpeded sky.

And borne aloft by the sustaining blast,
This little golden thread
Dilates into a column high and vast,
A form of fear and dread.

And onward, and across the setting sun,
Across the boundless plain,
The column and its broader shadow run,
Till thought pursues in vain.

The vision vanishes! These walls again
Shut out the lurid sun,
Shut out the hot immeasurable plain,
The half-hour's sand is run!

PEGASUS IN POUND

Once into a quiet village,
Without haste and without heed,
In the golden prime of morning,
Strayed the poet's wingèd steed.

It was Autumn, and incessant
Piped the quails from shocks and sheaves,
And, like living coals, the apples
Burned among the withering leaves.

Loud the clamorous bell was ringing
From its belfry gaunt and grim;
'Twas the daily call for labour,
Not a triumph meant for him.

Not the less he saw the landscape,
In its gleaming vapour veiled;
Not the less he breathed the odours
That the dying leaves exhaled.

Thus, upon the village common,
By the school-boys he was found;
And the wise men, in their wisdom,
Put him straightway into pound.

Then the sombre village crier,
Ringing loud his brazen bell,
Wandered down the street proclaiming
There was an estray to sell.

And the curious country people,
Rich and poor, and young and old,
Came in haste to see this wondrous
Wingèd steed, with mane of gold.

Thus the day passed, and the evening
Fell, with vapours cold and dim;
But it brought no food nor shelter,
Brought no straw nor stall, for him.

Patiently, and still expectant,
Looked he through the wooden bars,
Saw the moon rise o'er the landscape,
Saw the tranquil, patient stars;

Till at length the bell at midnight
Sounded from its dark abode,
And, from out a neighbouring farm-yard,
Loud the cock Alectryon crowed.

Then, with nostrils wide distended,
Breaking from his iron chain,
And unfolding far his pinions,
To those stars he soared again.

On the morrow, when the village
Woke to all its toil and care,
Lo ! the strange steed had departed,
And they knew not when nor where.

But they found, upon the greensward
Where his struggling hoofs had trod,
Pure and bright, a fountain flowing
From the hoof-marks in the sod.

From that hour, the fount unfailing
Gladdens the whole region round,
Strengthening all who drink its waters,
While it soothes them with its sound.

KING WITLAF'S DRINKING-HORN

Witlaf, a king of the Saxons,
Ere yet his last he breathed,
To the merry monks of Croyland
His drinking-horn bequeathed,—

That, whenever they sat at their revels,
And drank from the golden bowl,
They might remember the donor,
And breathe a prayer for his soul.

So sat they once at Christmas,
And bade the goblet pass ;
In their beards the red wine glistened
Like dew-drops in the grass.

They drank to the soul of Witlaf,
  They drank to Christ the Lord,
And to each of the Twelve Apostles
  Who had preached his holy word.

They drank to the Saints and Martyrs
  Of the dismal days of yore,
And as soon as the horn was empty
  They remembered one Saint more.

And the reader droned from the pulpit,
  Like the murmur of many bees,
The legend of good Saint Guthlac,
  And St. Basil's homilies;

Till the great bells of the convent,
  From their prison in the tower,
Guthlac and Bartholomæus,
  Proclaimed the midnight hour.

And the Yule-log cracked in the chimney,
  And the Abbot bowed his head,
And the flamelets flapped and flickered,
  But the Abbot was stark and dead.

Yet still in his pallid fingers
  He clutched the golden bowl,
In which, like a pearl dissolving,
  Had sunk and dissolved his soul.

But not for this their revels
  The jovial monks forbore,
For they cried, "Fill high the goblet!
  We must drink to one Saint more!"

TEGNER'S DRAPA

I HEARD a voice that cried,
"Balder the Beautiful
Is dead, is dead!"
And through the misty air
Passed like the mournful cry
Of sunward sailing cranes.

I saw the pallid corpse
Of the dead sun
Borne through the Northern sky.
Blasts from Niffelheim
Lifted the sheeted mists
Around him as he passed.

And the voice for ever cried,
"Balder the Beautiful
Is dead, is dead!"
And died away
Through the dreary night,
In accents of despair.

Balder the Beautiful,
God of the summer sun,
Fairest of all the Gods!
Light from his forehead beamed,
Runes were upon his tongue,
As on the warrior's sword.

All things in earth and air
Bound were by magic spell
Never to do him harm;
Even the plants and stones,
All save the mistletoe,
The sacred mistletoe!

Hœder, the blind old God,
Whose feet are shod with silence,
Pierced through that gentle breast
With his sharp spear, by fraud
Made of the mistletoe,
The accursed mistletoe!

They laid him in his ship,
With horse and harness,
As on a funeral pyre.
Odin placed
A ring upon his finger,
And whispered in his ear.

They launched the burning ship!
It floated far away
Over the misty sea,
Till like the sun it seemed,
Sinking beneath the waves.
Balder returned no more!

So perish the old Gods!
But out of the sea of Time
Rises a new land of song,
Fairer than the old.
Over its meadows green
Walk the young bards and sing.

Build it again,
O ye bards,
Fairer than before!
Ye fathers of the new race,
Feed upon morning dew,
Sing the new Song of Love!

The law of force is dead!
The law of love prevails!
Thor, the thunderer,
Shall rule the earth no more,
No more, with threats,
Challenge the meek Christ.

Sing no more,
O ye bards of the North,
Of Vikings and of Jarls!
Of the days of Eld
Preserve the freedom only,
Not the deeds of blood.

THE SINGERS

God sent his Singers upon earth
With songs of sadness and of mirth,
That they might touch the hearts of men,
And bring them back to heaven again.

The first, a youth, with soul of fire,
Held in his hand a golden lyre;
Through groves he wandered, and by streams,
Playing the music of our dreams.

The second, with a bearded face,
Stood singing in the market-place,
And stirred with accents deep and loud
The hearts of all the listening crowd.

A grey old man, the third and last,
Sang in cathedrals dim and vast,
While the majestic organ rolled
Contrition from its mouths of gold.

And those who heard the Singers three,
Disputed which the best might be;
For still their music seemed to start
Discordant echoes in each heart.

But the great Master said, "I see
No best in kind, but in degree;
I gave a various gift to each,
To charm, to strengthen, and to teach.

"These are the three great chords of might,
And he whose ear is tuned aright
Will hear no discord in the three,
But the most perfect harmony."

SUSPIRIA

Take them, O Death ! and bear away
Whatever thou canst call thine own !
Thine image stamped upon this clay,
Doth give thee that, but that alone !

Take them, O Grave ! and let them lie
Folded upon thy narrow shelves,
As garments by the soul laid by,
And precious only to ourselves !

Take them, O great Eternity !
Our little life is but a gust,
That bends the branches of thy tree,
And trails its blossoms in the dust.

THE OPEN WINDOW

The old house by the lindens
Stood silent in the shade,
And on the gravelled pathway
The light and shadow played.

I saw the nursery windows
Wide open to the air ;
But the faces of the children,
They were no longer there.

The large Newfoundland house-dog
Was standing by the door;
He looked for his little playmates,
Who would return no more.

They walked not under the lindens,
They played not in the hall;
But shadow, and silence, and sadness
Were hanging over all.

The birds sang in the branches,
With sweet, familiar tone;
But the voices of the children
Will be heard in dreams alone!

And the boy that walked beside me,
He could not understand
Why closer in mine, ah! closer,
I pressed his warm, soft hand!

HYMN

FOR MY BROTHER'S ORDINATION

Christ to the young man said: "Yet one thing more;
If thou wouldst perfect be,
Sell all thou hast and give it to the poor,
And come and follow me!"

Within this temple Christ again, unseen,
Those sacred words hath said,
And his invisible hands to-day have been
Laid on a young man's head.

And evermore beside him on his way
The unseen Christ shall move,
That he may lean upon his arm and say,
"Dost thou, dear Lord, approve?"

Beside him at the marriage feast shall be,
To make the scene more fair;
Beside him in the dark Gethsemane
Of pain and midnight prayer.

O holy trust! O endless sense of rest!
Like the beloved John
To lay his head upon the Saviour's breast,
And thus to journey on!

GASPAR BECERRA

By his evening fire the artist
Pondered o'er his secret shame;
Baffled, weary, and disheartened,
Still he mused, and dreamed of fame.

'Twas an image of the Virgin
That had tasked his utmost skill;
But, alas! his fair ideal
Vanished and escaped him still.

From a distant Eastern island
Had the precious wood been brought;
Day and night the anxious master
At his toil untiring wrought;

Till, discouraged and desponding,
Sat he now in shadows deep,
And the day's humiliation
Found oblivion in sleep.

Then a voice cried, "Rise, O Master;
From the burning brand of oak
Shape the thought that stirs within thee!"
And the startled artist woke,—

Woke, and from the smoking embers
  Seized and quenched the glowing wood;
And therefrom he carved an image,
  And he saw that it was good.

O thou sculptor, painter, poet!
  Take this lesson to thy heart:
That is best which lieth nearest;
  Shape from that thy work of art.

THE GOLDEN LEGEND

1851

THE old *Legenda Aurea*, or Golden Legend, was originally written in Latin, in the thirteenth century, by Jacobus de Voragine, a Dominican friar, who afterwards became Archbishop of Genoa, and died in 1292.

He called his book simply *Legends of the Saints*. The epithet of Golden was given it by his admirers; for, as Wynkin de Worde says, "Like as passeth gold in value all other metals, so this legend exceedeth all other books." But Edward Leigh, in much distress of mind, calls it "a book written by a man of a leaden heart for the basenesse of the errours, that are without wit or reason, and of a brazen forehead, for his impudent boldnesse in reporting things so fabulous and incredible."

This work, the great text-book of the legendary lore of the Middle Ages, was translated into French in the fourteenth century by Jean de Vigney, and in the fifteenth into English by William Caxton. It has lately been made more accessible by a new French translation: *La Légende Dorée, traduite du Latin, par M. G. B.* Paris, 1850. There is a copy of the original, with the *Gesta Longobadorum* appended, in the Harvard College Library, Cambridge, printed at Strasburg, 1496. The title-page is wanting; and the volume begins with the *Tabula Legendorum*.

I have called this poem the Golden Legend, because the story upon which it is founded seems to me to surpass all other legends in beauty and significance. It exhibits, amid the corruptions of the Middle Ages, the virtue of disinterestedness and self-sacrifice, and the power of Faith, Hope, and Charity, sufficient for all the exigencies of life and death. The story is told, and perhaps invented, by Hartmann von der Aue, a Minnesinger of the twelfth century. The original may be found in Mailáth's *Altdeutsche Gedichte*, with a modern German version. There is another in Marbach's *Volksbucher*, No. 32.

PROLOGUE

The Spire of Strasburg Cathedral. Night and storm. LUCIFER, *with the Powers of the Air, trying to tear down the Cross.*

Lucifer. HASTEN! hasten!
O ye spirits!
From its station drag the ponderous
Cross of iron, that to mock us
Is uplifted high in air!
Voices. O, we cannot.
For around it
All the saints and guardian angels
Throng in legions to protect it;
They defeat us everywhere!

The Bells.

Laudo Deum verum!
Plebem voco!
Congrego clerum!

Lucifer. Lower! lower!
Hover downward!
Seize the loud vociferous bells, and
Clashing, clanging, to the pavement
Hurl them from their windy tower.
Voices. All thy thunders
Here are harmless!
For these bells have been anointed,[1]
And baptized with holy water!
They defy our utmost power.

The Bells.

Defunctos ploro!
Pestem fugo!
Festa decoro!

[1] One of the curious mediæval rites was the christening and anointing of bells. See Appendix.

Lucifer. Shake the casements!
Break the painted
Panes, that flame with gold and crimson:
Scatter them like leaves of Autumn,
Swept away before the blast!
Voices. Oh, we cannot;
The Archangel
Michael flames from every window,
With the sword of fire that drove us
Headlong, out of heaven, aghast!

The Bells.

Funera plango!
Fulgura frango!
Sabbata pango!

Lucifer. Aim your lightnings!
At the oaken,
Massive, iron-studded portals!
Sack the house of God, and scatter
Wide the ashes of the dead!
Voices. Oh, we cannot!
The Apostles
And the Martyrs, wrapped in mantles,
Stand as warders at the entrance,
Stand as sentinels o'erhead!

The Bells.

Excito lentos!
Dissipo ventos!
Paco cruentos!

Lucifer. Baffled! baffled!
Inefficient.
Craven spirits! leave this labour
Unto Time, the great Destroyer!
Come away, ere night is gone!
Voices. Onward! onward!
With the night-wind,
Over field and farm and forest,

Lonely homestead, darksome hamlet,
Blighting all we breathe upon !
[*They sweep away. Organ and Gregorian Chant.*]

Choir.

Nocte surgentes
Vigilemus omnes !

I

The Castle of Vautsberg on the Rhine. A chamber in a tower. Prince Henry, *sitting alone, ill and restless. Midnight.*

Prince Henry. I cannot sleep ! my fervid brain
Calls up the vanished Past again,
And throws its misty splendours deep
Into the pallid realms of sleep !
A breath from that far-distant shore
Comes freshening ever more and more,
And wafts o'er intervening seas
Sweet odours from the Hesperides !
A wind, that through the corridor
Just stirs the curtain, and no more,
And, touching the Æolian strings,
Faints with the burden that it brings !
Come back ! ye friendships long departed !
That like o'erflowing streamlets started,
And now are dwindled, one by one,
To stony channels in the sun !
Come back ! ye friends, whose lives are ended,
Come back, with all that light attended,
Which seemed to darken and decay
When ye arose and went away !
They come, the shapes of joy and woe,
The airy crowds of long-ago,
The dreams and fancies known of yore,
That have been, and shall be no more.
They change the cloisters of the night
Into a garden of delight;

They make the dark and dreary hours
Open and blossom into flowers!
I would not sleep! I love to be
Again in their fair company;
But ere my lips can bid them stay,
They pass and vanish quite away!
Alas! our memories may retrace
Each circumstance of time and place,
Season and scene come back again,
And outward things unchanged remain;
The rest we cannot reinstate;
Ourselves we cannot re-create,
Nor set our souls to the same key
Of the remembered harmony!

Rest! rest! Oh, give me rest and peace!
The thought of life that ne'er shall cease
Has something in it like despair,
A weight I am too weak to bear!
Sweeter to this afflicted breast
The thought of never-ending rest!
Sweeter the undisturbed and deep
Tranquillity of endless sleep!

[*A flash of lightning, out of which* LUCIFER *appears, in the garb of a travelling Physician.*]

Lucifer. All hail, Prince Henry!
Prince Henry (*starting*). Who is it speaks?
Who and what are you?
Lucifer. One who seeks
A moment's audience with the Prince.
Prince Henry. When came you in?
Lucifer. A moment since.
I found your study door unlocked,
And thought you answered when I knocked.
Prince Henry. I did not hear you.
Lucifer. You heard the thunder;
It was loud enough to waken the dead.
And it is not a matter of special wonder
That, when God is walking overhead,
You should not hear my feeble tread.

Prince Henry. What may your wish or purpose be?

Lucifer. Nothing or everything, as it pleases
Your Highness. You behold in me
Only a travelling Physician;
One of the few who have a mission
To cure incurable diseases,
Or those that are called so.

Prince Henry. Can you bring
The dead to life?

Lucifer. Yes; very nearly.
And what is a wiser and better thing,
Can keep the living from ever needing
Such an unnatural, strange proceeding,
By showing conclusively and clearly
That death is a stupid blunder merely,
And not a necessity of our lives.
My being here is accidental;
The storm, that against your casement drives,
In the little village below waylaid me.
And there I heard, with a secret delight,
Of your maladies, physical and mental,
Which neither astonished nor dismayed me.
And I hastened thither, though late in the night,
To proffer my aid!

Prince Henry (*ironically*). For this you came!
Ah, how can I ever hope to requite
This honour from one so erudite?

Lucifer. The honour is mine, or will be when
I have cured your disease.

Prince Henry. But not till then.

Lucifer. What is your illness?

Prince Henry. It has no name.
A smouldering, dull, perpetual flame,
As in a kiln, burns in my veins,
Sending up vapours to the head;
My heart has become a dull lagoon,
Which a kind of leprosy drinks and drains;
I am accounted as one who is dead,
And, indeed, I think I shall be soon.

Lucifer. And has Gordonius, the Divine,
In his famous Lily of Medicine,—
I see the book lies open before you,—
No remedy potent enough to restore you?
Prince Henry. None whatever!
Lucifer. The dead are dead,
And their oracles dumb, when questionèd
Of the new diseases that human life
Evolves in its progress, rank and rife.
Consult the dead upon things that were,
But the living only on things that are.
Have you done this, by the appliance
And aid of doctors?
Prince Henry. Ay, whole schools
Of doctors, with their learned rules;
But the case is quite beyond their science.
Even the doctors of Salern
Send me back word they can discern
No cure for a malady like this,
Save one which in its nature is
Impossible, and cannot be!
Lucifer. That sounds oracular!
Prince Henry. Unendurable!
Lucifer. What is their remedy?
Prince Henry. You shall see;
Writ in this scroll is the mystery.
Lucifer (*reading*). "Not to be cured, yet not incurable!
The only remedy that remains
Is the blood that flows from a maiden's veins,
Who of her own free will shall die,
And give her life as the price of yours!"
That is the strangest of all cures,
And one, I think, you will never try;
The prescription you may well put by,
As something impossible to find
Before the world itself shall end:
And yet who knows? One cannot say
That into some maiden's brain that kind
Of madness will not find its way.

Meanwhile permit me to recommend,
As the matter admits of no delay,
My wonderful Catholicon,
Of very subtile and magical powers.

Prince Henry. Purge with your nostrums and drugs infernal
The spouts and gargoyles of these towers,
Not me! My faith is utterly gone
In every power but the Power Supernal!
Pray tell me, of what school are you?

Lucifer. Both of the Old and of the New!
The school of Hermes Trismegistus,
Who uttered his oracles sublime
Before the Olympiads, in the dew
Of the early dusk and dawn of Time,
The reign of dateless old Hephæstus!
As northward, from its Nubian springs,
The Nile, for ever new and old,
Among the living and the dead,
Its mighty, mystic stream has rolled;
So, starting from its fountain-head
Under the lotus-leaves of Isis,
From the dead demigods of eld,
Through long, unbroken lines of kings
Its course the sacred art has held,
Unchecked, unchanged by man's devices.
This art the Arabian Geber taught,
And in alembics, finely wrought,
Distilling herbs and flowers, discovered
The secret that so long had hovered
Upon the misty verge of Truth,
The Elixir of Perpetual Youth,
Called Alcohol, in the Arab speech!
Like him, this wondrous lore I teach!

Prince Henry. What! an adept?

Lucifer. Nor less, nor more!

Prince Henry. I am a reader of your books,
A lover of that mystic lore!
With such a piercing glance it looks
Into great Nature's open eye,

And sees within it trembling lie
The portrait of the Deity!
And yet, alas! with all my pains,
The secret and the mystery
Have baffled and eluded me,
Unseen the grand result remains!

Lucifer (*showing a flask*). Behold it here! this little flask
Contains the wonderful quintessence,
The perfect flower and efflorescence,
Of all the knowledge man can ask!
Hold it up thus against the light!

Prince Henry. How limpid, pure, and crystalline,
How quick, and tremulous, and bright
The little wavelets dance and shine,
As were it the Water of Life in sooth!

Lucifer. It is! It assuages every pain,
Cures all disease, and gives again
To age the swift delights of youth.
Inhale its fragrance.

Prince Henry. It is sweet.
A thousand different odours meet
And mingle in its rare perfume,
Such as the winds of summer waft
At open windows through a room!

Lucifer. Will you not taste it?

Prince Henry. Will one draught
Suffice?

Lucifer. If not, you can drink more.

Prince Henry. Into this crystal goblet pour
So much as safely I may drink.

Lucifer (*pouring*). Let not the quantity alarm you;
You may drink all; it will not harm you.

Prince Henry. I am as one who on the brink
Of a dark river stands and sees
The waters flow, the landscape dim
Around him waver, wheel, and swim,
And, ere he plunges, stops to think
Into what whirlpools he may sink;
One moment pauses, and no more,

Then madly plunges from the shore!
Headlong into the mysteries
Of life and death I boldly leap,
Nor fear the fateful current's sweep,
Nor what in ambush lurks below!
For death is better than disease!

[*An* Angel *with an Æolian harp hovers in the air.*]

Angel. Woe! woe! eternal woe!
Not only the whispered prayer
Of love,
But the imprecations of hate,
Reverberate
For ever and ever through the air
Above!
This fearful curse
Shakes the great universe!

Lucifer (*disappearing*). Drink! drink!
And thy soul shall sink
Down into the dark abyss,
Into the infinite abyss,
From which no plummet nor rope
Ever drew up the silver sand of hope!

Prince Henry (*drinking*). It is like a draught of fire!
Through every vein
I feel again
The fever of youth, the soft desire;
A rapture that is almost pain
Throbs in my heart and fills my brain!
O joy! O joy! I feel
The band of steel
That so long and heavily has pressed
Upon my breast
Uplifted, and the malediction
Of my affliction
Is taken from me, and my weary breast
At length finds rest.

The Angel. It is but the rest of the fire, from which the air has been taken!

It is but the rest of the sand, when the hour-glass is not shaken !
It is but the rest of the tide between the ebb and the flow !
It is but the rest of the wind between the flaws that blow !
With fiendish laughter,
Hereafter,
This false physician
Will mock thee in thy perdition.

Prince Henry. Speak ! speak !
Who says that I am ill?
I am not ill ! I am not weak !
The trance, the swoon, the dream is o'er,
I feel the chill of death no more !
At length,
I stand renewed in all my strength !
Beneath me I can feel
The great earth stagger and reel,
As if the feet of a descending God
Upon its surface trod,
And like a pebble it rolled beneath his heel !
This, O brave physician ! this
Is thy great Palingenesis !

[*Drinks again.*]

The Angel. Touch the goblet no more !
It will make thy heart sore
To its very core !
Its perfume is the breath
Of the Angel of Death,
And the light that within it lies
Is the flash of his evil eyes.
Beware ! O beware !
For sickness, sorrow, and care
All are there !

Prince Henry (*sinking back*). O thou voice within my breast !
Why entreat me, why upbraid me,
When the steadfast tongues of truth
And the flattering hopes of youth

Have all deceived me and betrayed me?
Give me, give me rest, O, rest!
Golden visions wave and hover,
Golden vapours, waters streaming,
Landscapes moving, changing, gleaming!
I am like a happy lover
Who illumines life with dreaming!
Brave physician! Rare physician!
Well hast thou fulfilled thy mission.

[*His head falls on his book.*]

The Angel (*receding*). Alas! alas!
Like a vapour the golden vision
Shall fade and pass,
And thou wilt find in thy heart again
Only the blight of pain,
And bitter, bitter, bitter contrition!

Court-yard of the Castle. HUBERT *standing by the Gateway.*

Hubert. How sad the grand old castle looks!
O'erhead, the unmolested rooks
Upon the turret's windy top
Sit, talking of the farmer's crop;
Here in the court-yard springs the grass,
So few are now the feet that pass;
The stately peacocks, bolder grown,
Come hopping down the steps of stone,
As if the castle were their own;
And I, the poor old seneschal,
Haunt, like a ghost, the banquet-hall.
Alas! the merry guests no more
Crowd through the hospitable door;
No eyes with youth and passion shine,
No cheeks grow redder than the wine;
No song, no laugh, no jovial din
Of drinking wassail to the pin;[1]

[1] The cup was marked with wooden pegs at fixed distances, and it was usual for each carouser to drink only to the next pin or peg, that all might share alike.

But all is silent, sad, and drear,
And now the only sounds I hear
Are the hoarse rooks upon the walls,
And horses stamping in their stalls!
[*A horn sounds.*]
What ho! that merry, sudden blast
Reminds me of the days long past!
And, as of old resounding, grate
The heavy hinges of the gate,
And, clattering loud, with iron clank,
Down goes the sounding bridge of plank,
As if it were in haste to greet
The pressure of a traveller's feet!

Enter WALTER *the Minnesinger.*

Walter. How now, my friend! This looks quite lonely!
No banner flying from the walls,
No pages and no seneschals,
No warders, and one porter only!
Is it you, Hubert?
Hubert. Ah! Master Walter!
Walter. Alas! how forms and faces alter!
I did not know you. You look older!
Your hair has grown much greyer and thinner,
And you stoop a little in the shoulder!
Hubert. Alack! I am a poor old sinner,
And, like these towers, begin to moulder;
And you have been absent many a year!
Walter. How is the Prince?
Hubert. He is not here;
He has been ill: and now has fled.
Walter. Speak it out frankly; say he's dead!
Is it not so?
Hubert. No; if you please;
A strange, mysterious disease
Fell on him with a sudden blight.
Whole hours together he would stand
Upon the terrace, in a dream,

Resting his head upon his hand,
Best pleased when he was most alone,
Like Saint John Nepomuck in stone,
Looking down into a stream.
In the Round Tower, night after night,
He sat, and bleared his eyes with books,
Until one morning we found him there
Stretched on the floor, as if in a swoon
He had fallen from his chair.
We hardly recognised his sweet looks!

Walter. Poor Prince!

Hubert. I think he might have mended;
And he did mend; but very soon
The Priests came flocking in like rooks,
With all their crosiers and their crooks,
And so at last the matter ended.

Walter. How did it end?

Hubert. Why, in Saint Rochus
They made him stand and wait his doom;
And, as if he were condemned to the tomb,
Began to mutter their hocus-pocus.
First, the Mass for the dead they chanted,
Then three times laid upon his head
A shovelful of churchyard clay,
Saying to him, as he stood undaunted,
"This is a sign that thou art dead,
So in thy heart be penitent!"
And forth from the chapel door he went
Into disgrace and banishment,
Clothed in a cloak of hodden grey,
And bearing a wallet, and a bell,
Whose sound should be a perpetual knell
To keep all travellers away.

Walter. O, horrible fate! Outcast, rejected,
As one with pestilence infected!

Hubert. Then was the family tomb unsealed,
And broken helmet, sword, and shield,
Buried together, in common wreck,
As is the custom, when the last
Of any princely house has passed,

And thrice, as with a trumpet-blast,
A herald shouted down the stair
The words of warning and despair,—
"O Hoheneck! O Hoheneck!"

Walter. Still in my soul that cry goes on,—
For ever gone! for ever gone!
Ah, what a cruel sense of loss,
Like a black shadow, would fall across
The hearts of all, if he should die!
His gracious presence upon earth
Was as a fire upon a hearth;
As pleasant songs, at morning sung,
The words that dropped from his sweet tongue
Strengthened our hearts; or, heard at night,
Made all our slumbers soft and light.
Where is he?

Hubert. In the Odenwald.
Some of his tenants, unappalled
By fear of death, or priestly word,—
A holy family, that make
Each meal a Supper of the Lord,—
Have him beneath their watch and ward,
For love of him, and Jesus' sake!
Pray you come in. For why should I
With out-door hospitality
My prince's friend thus entertain?

Walter. I would a moment here remain.
But you, good Hubert, go before,
Fill me a goblet of May-drink,
As aromatic as the May
From which it steals the breath away,
And which he loved so well of yore;
It is of him that I would think.
You shall attend me, when I call,
In the ancestral banquet-hall.
Unseen companions, guests of air,
You cannot wait on, will be there;
They taste not food, they drink not wine,
But their soft eyes look into mine,
And their lips speak to me, and all

The vast and shadowy banquet-hall
Is full of looks and words divine !
[*Leaning over the parapet.*]
The day is done ; and slowly from the scene
The stooping sun upgathers his spent shafts,
And puts them back into his golden quiver :
Below me in the valley, deep and green
As goblets are, from which in thirsty draughts
We drink its wine, the swift and mantling river
Flows on triumphant through these lovely regions,
Etched with the shadows of its sombre margent,
And soft, reflected clouds of gold and argent !
Yes, there it flows, for ever, broad and still,
As when the vanguard of the Roman legions
First saw it from the top of yonder hill !
How beautiful it is ! Fresh fields of wheat,
Vineyard, and town, and tower with fluttering flag,
The consecrated chapel on the crag,
And the white hamlet gathered round its base,
Like Mary sitting at her Saviour's feet,
And looking up at his beloved face !
O friend ! O best of friends ! Thy absence more
Than the impending night darkens the landscape o'er !

II

A Farm in the Odenwald. A garden ; morning ; Prince Henry *seated, with a book.* Elsie, *at a distance, gathering flowers.*

Prince Henry (*reading*). One morning, all alone,
Out of his convent of grey stone,
Into the forest older, darker, greyer,
His lips moving as if in prayer,
His head sunken upon his breast
As in a dream of rest,
Walked the Monk Felix. All about
The broad, sweet sunshine lay without,
Filling the summer air ;

And within the woodlands as he trod,
The twilight was like the Truce of God
With worldly woe and care;
Under him lay the golden moss;
And above him the boughs of hoary trees
Waved and made the sign of the cross,
And whispered their Benedicites;
And from the ground
Rose an odour sweet and fragrant
Of the wild-flowers and the vagrant
Vines that wandered,
Seeking the sunshine, round and round.

These he heeded not, but pondered
On the volume in his hand,
A volume of St. Augustine,
Wherein he read of the unseen
Splendours of God's great town
In the unknown land,
And, with his eyes cast down
In humility, he said:
"I believe, O God,
What herein I have read,
But, alas! I do not understand!"
And lo! he heard
The sudden singing of a bird,
A snow-white bird, that from a cloud
Dropped down,
And among the branches brown
Sat singing
So sweet, and clear, and loud,
It seemed a thousand harp-strings ringing.
And the Monk Felix closed his book,
And long, long,
With rapturous look,
He listened to the song,
And hardly breathed or stirred,
Until he saw, as in a vision,
The land Elysian,
And in the heavenly city heard

Angelic feet
Fall on the golden flagging of the street.
And he would fain
Have caught the wondrous bird,
But strove in vain;
For it flew away, away,
Far over hill and dell,
And instead of its sweet singing
He heard the convent bell
Suddenly in the silence ringing
For the service of noonday.
And he retraced
His pathway homeward sadly and in haste.

In the convent there was a change!
He looked for each well-known face,
But the faces were new and strange;
New figures sat in the oaken stalls,
New voices chanted in the choir;
Yet the place was the same place,
The same dusky walls
Of cold, grey stone,
The same cloisters and belfry and spire.
A stranger and alone
Among that brotherhood
The Monk Felix stood.
"Forty years," said a Friar,
"Have I been Prior
Of this convent in the wood,
But for that space
Never have I beheld thy face!"

The heart of the Monk Felix fell:
And he answered, with submissive tone,
"This morning, after the hour of Prime,
I left my cell,
And wandered forth alone,
Listening all the time
To the melodious singing
Of a beautiful white bird,

Until I heard
The bells of the convent ringing
Noon from their noisy towers.
It was as if I dreamed;
For what to me had seemed
Moments only, had been hours!"

"Years," said a voice close by.
It was an aged monk who spoke,
From a bench of oak
Fastened against the wall;—
He was the oldest monk of all.
For a whole century
Had he been there,
Serving God in prayer,
The meekest and humblest of his creatures.
He remembered well the features
Of Felix, and he said,
Speaking distinct and slow:
"One hundred years ago,
When I was a novice in this place,
There was here a monk, full of God's grace,
Who bore the name
Of Felix, and this man must be the same."

And straightway
They brought back to the light of day
A volume old and brown,
A huge tome, bound
In brass and wild-boar's hide,
Wherein were written down
The names of all who had died
In the convent, since it was edified.
And there they found,
Just as the old monk said,
That on a certain day and date,
One hundred years before,
Had gone forth from the convent gate
The Monk Felix, and never more
Had entered that sacred door.

He had been counted among the dead!
And they knew, at last,
That, such had been the power
Of that celestial and immortal song,
A hundred years had passed,
And had not seemed so long
As a single hour!

ELSIE *comes in with flowers.*

Elsie. Here are flowers for you,
But they are not all for you.
Some of them are for the Virgin
And for Saint Cecilia.

Prince Henry. As thou standest there,
Thou seemest to me like the angel
That brought the immortal robes
To Saint Cecilia's bridal chamber.

Elsie. But these will fade.

Prince Henry. Themselves will fade,
But not their memory,
And memory has the power
To re-create them from the dust.
They remind me, too,
Of martyred Dorothea,
Who from celestial gardens sent
Flowers as her witnesses
To him who scoffed and doubted.

Elsie. Do you know the story
Of Christ and the Sultan's daughter?
That is the prettiest legend of them all.

Prince Henry. Then tell it to me.
But first come hither.
Lay the flowers down beside me,
And put both thy hands in mine.
Now tell me the story.

Elsie. Early in the morning
The Sultan's daughter
Walked in her father's garden,
Gathering the bright flowers,
All full of dew.

Prince Henry. Just as thou hast been doing
This morning, dearest Elsie.
Elsie. And as she gathered them,
She wondered more and more
Who was the Master of the Flowers,
And made them grow
Out of the cold, dark earth.
"In my heart," she said,
"I love him ; and for him
Would leave my father's palace
To labour in his garden."
Prince Henry. Dear, innocent child!
How sweetly thou recallest
The long-forgotten legend,
That in my early childhood
My mother told me!
Upon my brain
It reappears once more,
As a birthmark on the forehead
When a hand suddenly
Is laid upon it, and removed!
Elsie. And at midnight
As she lay upon her bed,
She heard a voice
Call to her from the garden,
And, looking forth from her window,
She saw a beautiful youth
Standing among the flowers.
It was the Lord Jesus ;
And she went down to him,
And opened the door for him ;
And he said to her, "O maiden!
Thou hast thought of me with love,
And for thy sake
Out of my Father's kingdom
Have I come hither :
I am the Master of the Flowers.
My garden is in Paradise,
And if thou wilt go with me,
Thy bridal garland

Shall be of bright red flowers."
And then he took from his finger
A golden ring,
And asked the Sultan's daughter
If she would be his bride.
And when she answered him with love,
His wounds began to bleed,
And she said to him,
"O Love! how red thy heart is,
And thy hands are full of roses."
"For thy sake," answered he,
"For thy sake is my heart so red,
For thee I bring these roses.
I gathered them at the cross
Whereon I died for thee!
Come, for my Father calls.
Thou art my elected bride!"
And the Sultan's daughter
Followed him to his Father's garden.

Prince Henry. Wouldst thou have done so, Elsie?

Elsie. Yes, very gladly.

Prince Henry. Then the Celestial Bridegroom
Will come for thee also,
Upon thy forehead he will place,
Not his crown of thorns,
But a crown of roses.
In the bridal chamber,
Like Saint Cecilia,
Thou shalt hear sweet music,
And breathe the fragrance
Of flowers immortal!
Go now and place these flowers
Before her picture.

A room in the Farmhouse. Twilight. URSULA *spinning.* GOTTLIEB *asleep in his chair.*

Ursula. Darker and darker! Hardly a glimmer
Of light comes in at the window-pane;
Or is it my eyes are growing dimmer?
I cannot disentangle this skein,

Nor wind it rightly upon the reel.
Elsie!

Gottlieb (*starting*). The stopping of thy wheel
Has wakened me out of a pleasant dream.
I thought I was sitting beside a stream,
And heard the grinding of a mill,
When suddenly the wheels stood still,
And a voice cried "Elsie" in my ear!
It startled me, it seemed so near.

Ursula. I was calling her; I want a light
I cannot see to spin my flax.
Bring the lamp, Elsie. Dost thou hear?

Elsie (*within*). In a moment!

Gottlieb. Where are Bertha and Max?

Ursula. They are sitting with Elsie at the door.
She is telling them stories of the wood,
And the Wolf, and Little Red Ridinghood.

Gottlieb. And where is the Prince?

Ursula. In his room overhead
I heard him walking across the floor,
As he always does, with a heavy tread.

ELSIE *comes in with a lamp.* MAX *and* BERTHA *follow her, and they all sing the Evening Song on the lighting of the lamps.*

EVENING SONG

O gladsome light
Of the Father Immortal,
And of the celestial
Sacred and blessed
Jesus, our Saviour!

Now to the sunset
Again hast thou brought us;
And, seeing the evening
Twilight, we bless thee,
Praise thee, adore thee!

Father Omnipotent!
Son, the Life-giver!
Spirit, the Comforter!
Worthy at all times
Of worship and wonder!

Prince Henry (*at the door*). Amen!
Ursula. Who was it said Amen?
Elsie. It was the Prince: he stood at the door,
And listened a moment, as we chanted
The evening song. He is gone again.
I have often seen him there before.
Ursula. Poor Prince!
Gottlieb. I thought the house was haunted!
Poor Prince, alas! and yet as mild
And patient as the gentlest child!
Max. I love him because he is so good,
And makes me such fine bows and arrows,
To shoot at the robins and the sparrows,
And the red squirrels in the wood!
Bertha. I love him, too!
Gottlieb. Ah, yes! we all
Love him, from the bottom of our hearts;
He gave us the farm, the house, and the grange,
He gave us the horses and the carts,
And the great oxen in the stall,
The vineyard, and the forest range!
We have nothing to give him but our love!
Bertha. Did he give us the beautiful stork above
On the chimney-top, with its large, round nest?
Gottlieb. No, not the stork; by God in heaven,
As a blessing, the dear, white stork was given;
But the Prince has given us all the rest.
God bless him, and make him well again.
Elsie. Would I could do something for his sake,
Something to cure his sorrow and pain!
Gottlieb. That no one can; neither thou nor I,
Nor any one else.
Elsie. And must he die?
Ursula. Yes; if the dear God does not take
Pity upon him, in his distress,
And work a miracle!
Gottlieb. Or unless
Some maiden, of her own accord,
Offers her life for that of her lord,

And is willing to die in his stead.
Elsie. I will!
Ursula. Prithee, thou foolish child, be still.
Thou shouldst not say what thou dost not mean!
Elsie. I mean it truly!
Max. Oh, father! this morning,
Down by the mill, in the ravine,
Hans killed a wolf, the very same
That in the night to the sheepfold came,
And ate up my lamb, that was left outside.
Gottlieb. I am glad he is dead. It will be a warning
To the wolves in the forest, far and wide.
Max. And I am going to have his hide!
Bertha. I wonder if this is the wolf that ate
Little Red Ridinghood!
Ursula. Oh, no!
That wolf was killed a long while ago.
Come, children, it is growing late.
Max. Ah, how I wish I were a man,
As stout as Hans is, and as strong!
I would do nothing else, the whole day long,
But just kill wolves.
Gottlieb. Then go to bed,
And grow as fast as a little boy can.
Bertha is half asleep already.
See how she nods her heavy head,
And her sleepy feet are so unsteady,
She will hardly be able to creep upstairs.
Ursula. Good night, my children. Here's the light.
And do not forget to say your prayers
Before you sleep.
Gottlieb. Good night!
Max and Bertha. Good night!
[*They go out with* ELSIE.]
Ursula (*spinning*). She is a strange and wayward child,
That Elsie of ours. She looks so old,
And thoughts and fancies weird and wild
Seem of late to have taken hold

Of her heart, that was once so docile and mild!

Gottlieb. She is like all girls.

Ursula. Ah no, forsooth!
Unlike all I have ever seen.
For she has visions and strange dreams,
And in all her words and ways, she seems
Much older than she is in truth.
Who would think her but fifteen?
And there has been of late such a change!
My heart is heavy with fear and doubt
That she may not live till the year is out.
She is so strange,—so strange,—so strange!

Gottlieb. I am not troubled with any such fear;
She will live and thrive for many a year.

[ELSIE'S *Chamber. Night.* ELSIE *praying.*]

Elsie. My Redeemer and my Lord,
I beseech thee, I entreat thee,
Guide me in each act and word,
That hereafter I may meet thee,
Watching, waiting, hoping, yearning,
With my lamp well trimmed and burning?

Interceding
With these bleeding
Wounds upon thy hands and side,
For all who have lived and erred
Thou hast suffered, thou hast died,
Scourged, and mocked, and crucified,
And in the grave hast thou been buried!

If my feeble prayer can reach thee,
O my Saviour, I beseech thee,
Even as thou hast died for me,
More sincerely
Let me follow where thou leadest;
Let me, bleeding as thou bleedest,
Die, if dying I may give
Life to one who asks to live,
And more nearly,
Dying thus, resemble thee!

The Chamber of GOTTLIEB *and* URSULA. *Midnight.* ELSIE *standing by their bedside weeping.*

Gottlieb. The wind is roaring; the rushing rain
Is loud upon roof and window-pane,
As if the wild Huntsman of Rodenstein,
Boding evil to me and mine,
Were abroad to-night, with his ghostly train!
In the brief lulls of the tempest wild,
The dogs howl in the yard; and hark!
Some one is sobbing in the dark,
Here in the chamber!

Elsie. It is I.

Ursula. Elsie, what ails thee, my poor child?

Elsie. I am disturbed and much distressed,
In thinking our dear Prince must die;
I cannot close mine eyes, nor rest.

Gottlieb. What wouldst thou? In the Power Divine
His healing lies, not in our own;
It is in the hand of God alone.

Elsie. Nay, he has put it into mine,
And into my heart!

Gottlieb. Thy words are wild!

Ursula. What dost thou mean? my child! my child!

Elsie. That for our dear Prince Henry's sake
I will myself the offering make,
And give my life to purchase his.

Ursula. Am I still dreaming or awake?
Thou speakest carelessly of death,
And yet thou knowest not what it is.

Elsie. 'Tis the cessation of our breath.
Silent and motionless we lie;
And no one knoweth more than this.
I saw our little Gertrude die;
She left off breathing, and no more.
I smoothed the pillow beneath her head.
She was more beautiful than before.
Like violets faded were her eyes;

By this we knew that she was dead.
Through the open window looked the skies
Into the chamber where she lay,
And the wind was like the sound of wings,
As if angels came to bear her away.
Ah ! when I saw and felt these things,
I found it difficult to stay ;
I longed to die, as she had died,
And go forth with her, side by side.
The Saints are dead, the Martyrs dead,
And Mary, and our Lord ; and I
Would follow in humility
The way by them illumined !

Ursula. My child ! my child ! thou must not die !

Elsie. Why should I live? Do I not know
The life of woman is full of woe?
Toiling on and on and on,
With breaking heart and tearful eyes,
And silent lips, and in the soul
The secret longings that arise,
Which this world never satisfies !
Some more, some less, but of the whole
Not one quite happy, no, not one !

Ursula. It is the malediction of Eve.[1]

Elsie. In place of it, let me receive
The benediction of Mary, then.

Gottlieb. Ah, woe is me ! Ah, woe is me !
Most wretched am I among men !

Ursula. Alas ! that I should live to see
Thy death, beloved, and to stand
Above thy grave ! Ah, woe the day !

Elsie. Thou wilt not see it. I shall lie
Beneath the flowers of another land ;
For at Salerno, far away
Over the mountains, over the sea,
It is appointed me to die !
And it will seem no more to thee

[1] See Appendix.

Than if at the village on market-day
I should a little longer stay
Than I am wont.
Ursula. Even as thou sayest!
And how my heart beats when thou stayest!
I cannot rest until my sight
Is satisfied in seeing thee.
What, then, if thou wert dead?
Gottlieb. Ah me!
Of our old eyes thou art the light!
The joy of our old hearts art thou!
And wilt thou die?
Ursula. Not now! not now!
Elsie. Christ died for me, and shall not I
Be willing for my Prince to die?
You both are silent; you cannot speak.
This said I, at our Saviour's feast,
After confession to the priest,
And even he made no reply.
Does he not warn us all to seek
The happier, better land on high,
Where flowers immortal never wither;
And could he forbid me to go thither?
Gottlieb. In God's own time, my heart's delight!
When he shall call thee, not before!
Elsie. I heard him call. When Christ ascended
Triumphantly, from star to star,
He left the gates of heaven ajar.
I had a vision in the night,
And saw him standing at the door
Of his Father's mansion, vast and splendid,
And beckoning to me from afar.
I cannot stay!
Gottlieb. She speaks almost
As if it were the Holy Ghost
Spake through her lips, and in her stead!
What if this were of God?
Ursula. Ah, then
Gainsay dare we not.

Gottlieb. Amen!
Elsie! the words that thou hast said
Are strange and new for us to hear,
And fill our hearts with doubt and fear.
Whether it be a dark temptation
Of the Evil One, or God's inspiration,
We in our blindness cannot say.
We must think upon it, and pray;
For evil and good it both resembles.
If it be of God, his will be done!
May he guard us from the Evil One!
How hot thy hand is! how it trembles!
Go to thy bed, and try to sleep.

Ursula. Kiss me. Good night; and do not weep.

[ELSIE *goes out.*]

Ah, what an awful thing is this!
I almost shuddered at her kiss,
As if a ghost had touched my cheek,
I am so childish and so weak!
As soon as I see the earliest grey
Of morning glimmer in the east,
I will go over to the priest,
And hear what the good man has to say!

A village church. A woman kneeling at the Confessional.

The Parish Priest (*from within*). Go, sin no more! Thy penance o'er,
A new and better life begin!
God maketh thee for ever free
From the dominion of thy sin!
Go, sin no more! He will restore
The peace that filled thy heart before,
And pardon thine iniquity!

[*The woman goes out. The Priest comes forth, and walks slowly up and down the church.*]

O blessed Lord! how much I need
Thy light to guide me on my way!

So many hands, that, without heed,
Still touch thy wounds, and make them bleed!
So many feet that, day by day,
Still wander from thy fold astray!
Unless thou fill me with thy light,
I cannot lead thy flock aright;
Nor, without thy support, can bear
The burden of so great a care,
But am myself a castaway!

[*A pause.*]

The day is drawing to its close;
And what good deeds, since first it rose,
Have I presented, Lord, to thee,
As offerings of my ministry?
What wrong repressed, what right maintained,
What struggle passed, what victory gained,
What good attempted and attained?
Feeble, at best, is my endeavour!
I see, but cannot reach, the height
That lies for ever in the light;
And yet for ever, and for ever,
When seeming just within my grasp,
I feel my feeble hands unclasp,
And sink discouraged into night!
For thine own purpose thou hast sent
The strife and the discouragement!

[*A pause.*]

Why stayest thou, Prince of Hoheneck?
Why keep me pacing to and fro
Amid these aisles of sacred gloom,
Counting my footsteps as I go,
And marking with each step a tomb?
Why should the world for thee make room,
And wait thy leisure and thy beck?
Thou comest in the hope to hear
Some word of comfort and of cheer.
What can I say? I cannot give
The counsel to do this and live;
But rather, firmly to deny
The tempter, though his power be strong,

And, inaccessible to wrong,
Still like a martyr live and die!
[*A pause.*]
The evening air grows dusk and brown;
I must go forth into the town,
To visit beds of pain and death,
Of restless limbs and quivering breath,
And sorrowing hearts, and patient eyes
That see, through tears, the sun go down,
But never more shall see it rise.
The poor, in body and estate,
The sick and the disconsolate,
Must not on man's convenience wait.
[*Goes out.*]

Enter LUCIFER, *as a Priest.*

Lucifer (*with a genuflection, mocking*). This is the Black Pater-noster.
God was my foster.
He fostered me
Under the book of the Palm-tree!
St. Michael was my dame.
He was born at Bethlehem,
He was made of flesh and blood.
God send me my right food,
My right food, and shelter too,
That I may to yon kirk go,
To read upon yon sweet book
Which the mighty God of heaven shook.
Open, open, hell's gates!
Shut, shut, heaven's gates!
All the devils in the air
The stronger be, that hear the Black Prayer!
[*Looking round the church.*]
What a darksome and dismal place!
I wonder that any man has the face
To call such a hole the House of the Lord,
And the Gate of Heaven,—yet such is the word.
Ceiling and walls, and windows old,
Covered with cobwebs, blackened with mould;

Dust on the pulpit, dust on the stairs,
Dust on the benches, and stalls, and chairs!
The pulpit, from which such ponderous sermons
Have fallen down on the brains of the Germans,
With about as much real edification
As if a great Bible, bound in lead,
Had fallen and struck them on the head;
And I ought to remember that sensation!
Here stands the holy-water stoup!
Holy-water it may be to many,
But to me, the veriest Liquor Gehennæ!
It smells like a filthy fast-day soup!
Near it stands the box for the poor;
With its iron padlock safe and sure.
I and the priest of the parish know
Whither all these charities go;
Therefore, to keep up the institution,
I will add my little contribution!
[*He puts in money.*]
Underneath this mouldering tomb,
With statue of stone, and scutcheon of brass,
Slumbers a great lord of the village.
All his life was riot and pillage,
But at length, to escape the threatened doom
Of the everlasting, penal fire,
He died in the dress of a mendicant friar,
And bartered his wealth for a daily mass.
But all that afterwards came to pass,
And whether he finds it dull or pleasant,
Is kept a secret for the present,
At his own particular desire.

And here, in a corner of the wall,
Shadowy, silent, apart from all,
With its awful portal open wide,
And its latticed windows on either side,
And its step well worn by the bended knees
Of one or two pious centuries,
Stands the village confessional!

Within it, as an honoured guest,
I will sit me down awhile and rest!
[*Seats himself in the Confessional.*]
Here sits the priest; and faint and low,
Like the sighing of an evening breeze,
Comes through these painted lattices
The ceaseless sound of human woe;
Here, while her bosom aches and throbs
With deep and agonizing sobs,
That half are passion, half contrition,
The luckless daughter of perdition
Slowly confesses her secret shame!
The time, the place, the lover's name!
Here the grim murderer, with a groan,
From his bruised conscience rolls the stone,
Thinking that thus he can atone
For ravages of sword and flame!
Indeed, I marvel, and marvel greatly,
How a priest can sit here so sedately,
Reading, the whole year out and in,
Naught but the catalogue of sin,
And still keep any faith whatever
In human virtue! Never! never!

I cannot repeat a thousandth part
Of the horrors and crimes and sins and woes
That arise, when with palpitating throes
The grave-yard in the human heart
Gives up its dead, at the voice of the priest,
As if he were an archangel, at least.
It makes a peculiar atmosphere,
This odour of earthly passions and crimes,
Such as I like to breathe, at times,
And such as often brings me here
In the hottest and most pestilential season.
To-day I come for another reason;
To foster and ripen an evil thought
In a heart that is almost to madness wrought,
And to make a murderer out of a prince,
A sleight of hand I learned long since!

He comes. In the twilight he will not see
The difference between his priest and me!
In the same net was the mother caught!

PRINCE HENRY, *entering and kneeling at the Confessional.*

Remorseful, penitent, and lowly,
I come to crave, O Father holy,
Thy benediction on my head.

Lucifer. The benediction shall be said
After confession, not before!
'Tis a God-speed to the parting guest,
Who stands already at the door,
Sandalled with holiness, and dressed
In garments pure from earthly stain.
Meanwhile, hast thou searched well thy breast?
Does the same madness fill thy brain?
Or have thy passion and unrest
Vanished for ever from thy mind?

Prince Henry. By the same madness still made blind,
By the same passion still possessed,
I come again to the house of prayer,
A man afflicted and distressed!
As in a cloudy atmosphere,
Through unseen sluices of the air,
A sudden and impetuous wind
Strikes the great forest white with fear,
And every branch, and bough, and spray
Points all its quivering leaves one way,
And meadows of grass, and fields of grain,
And the clouds above, and the slanting rain,
And smoke from chimneys of the town,
Yield themselves to it, and bow down,
So does this dreadful purpose press
Onward, with irresistible stress,
And all my thoughts and faculties,
Struck level by the strength of this,
From their true inclination turn,
And all stream forward to Salern!

Lucifer. Alas! we are but eddies of dust,
Uplifted by the blast, and whirled
Along the highway of the world
A moment only, then to fall
Back to a common level all,
At the subsiding of the gust!

Prince Henry. O holy Father! pardon in me
The oscillation of a mind
Unsteadfast, and that cannot find
Its centre of rest and harmony!
For evermore before mine eyes
This ghastly phantom flits and flies,
And as a madman through a crowd
With frantic gestures and wild cries,
It hurries onward, and aloud
Repeats its awful prophecies!
Weakness is wretchedness! To be strong
Is to be happy! I am weak,
And cannot find the good I seek,
Because I feel and fear the wrong!

Lucifer. Be not alarmed! The Church is kind,
And in her mercy and her meekness
She meets half-way her children's weakness,
Writes their transgressions in the dust!
Though in the Decalogue we find
The mandate written, "Thou shalt not kill!"
Yet there are cases when we must.
In war, for instance, or from scathe
To guard and keep the one true Faith!
We must look at the Decalogue in the light
Of an ancient statute, that was meant
For a mild and general application,
To be understood with the reservation,
That, in certain instances, the Right
Must yield to the Expedient!
Thou art a Prince. If thou shouldst die,
What hearts and hopes would prostrate lie!
What noble deeds, what fair renown,
Into the grave with thee go down!

What acts of valour and courtesy
Remain undone, and die with thee!
Thou art the last of all thy race!
With thee a noble name expires,
And vanishes from the earth's face
The glorious memory of thy sires!
She is a peasant. In her veins
Flows common and plebeian blood;
It is such as daily and hourly stains
The dust and the turf of battle plains,
By vassals shed, in a crimson flood,
Without reserve, and without reward,
At the slightest summons of their lord!
But thine is precious; the fore-appointed
Blood of kings, of God's anointed!
Moreover, what has the world in store
For one like her, but tears and toil?
Daughter of sorrow, serf of the soil,
A peasant's child and a peasant's wife,
And her soul within her sick and sore
With the roughness and barrenness of life!
I marvel not at the heart's recoil
From a fate like this in one so tender,
Nor at its eagerness to surrender
All the wretchedness, want, and woe
That await it in this world below,
For the unutterable splendour
Of the world of rest beyond the skies.
So the Church sanctions the sacrifice:
Therefore inhale this healing balm,
And breathe this fresh life into thine;
Accept the comfort and the calm
She offers, as a gift divine;
Let her fall down and anoint thy feet
With the ointment costly and most sweet
Of her young blood, and thou shalt live.

Prince Henry. And will the righteous Heaven forgive?
No action, whether foul or fair,
Is ever done, but it leaves somewhere

A record, written by fingers ghostly,
As a blessing or a curse, and mostly
In the greater weakness or greater strength
Of the acts which follow it, till at length
The wrongs of ages are redressed,
And the justice of God made manifest!

Lucifer. In ancient records it is stated
That, whenever an evil deed is done,
Another devil is created
To scourge and torment the offending one!
But evil is only good perverted,
And Lucifer, the Bearer of Light,
But an angel fallen and deserted,
Thrust from his Father's house with a curse
Into the black and endless night.

Prince Henry. If justice rules the universe,
From the good actions of good men
Angels of light should be begotten,
And thus the balance restored again.

Lucifer. Yes; if the world were not so rotten,
And so given over to the Devil!

Prince Henry. But this deed, is it good or evil?
Have I thine absolution free
To do it, and without restriction?

Lucifer. Ay! and from whatsoever sin
Lieth around it and within
From all crimes in which it may involve thee,
I now release thee and absolve thee!

Prince Henry. Give me thy holy benediction.

Lucifer (*stretching forth his hand and muttering*).

Maledictione perpetua
Maledicat vos
Pater eternus!

The Angel, *with the Æolian harp.*

Take heed! take heed!
Noble art thou in thy birth,
By the good and the great of earth

Hast thou been taught!
Be noble in every thought
And in every deed!
Let not the illusion of thy senses
Betray thee to deadly offences.
Be strong! be good! be pure!
The right only shall endure,
All things else are but false pretences.
I entreat thee, I implore,
Listen no more
To the suggestions of an evil spirit
That even now is there,
Making the foul seem fair,
And selfishness itself a virtue and a merit!

A room in the Farmhouse.

Gottlieb. It is decided! for many days,
And nights as many, we have had
A nameless terror in our breast,
Making us timid, and afraid
Of God, and his mysterious ways!
We have been sorrowful and sad;
Much have we suffered, much have prayed
That he would lead us as is best,
And show us what his will required.
It is decided; and we give
Our child, O Prince, that you may live!

Ursula. It is of God. He has inspired
This purpose in her; and through pain,
Out of a world of sin and woe,
He takes her to himself again.
The mother's heart resists no longer;
With the Angel of the Lord in vain
It wrestled, for he was the stronger.

Gottlieb. As Abraham offered long ago
His son unto the Lord, and even
The everlasting Father in heaven
Gave his, as a lamb unto the slaughter,
So do I offer up my daughter.

[URSULA *hides her face.*]

Elsie. My life is little,
Only a cup of water,
But pure and limpid.
Take it, O my Prince!
Let it refresh you,
Let it restore you.
It is given willingly,
It is given freely;
May God bless the gift!

Prince Henry. And the giver!

Gottlieb. Amen!

Prince Henry. I accept it!

Gottlieb. Where are the children?

Ursula. They are already asleep.

Gottlieb. What if they were dead?

In the garden.

Elsie. I have one thing to ask of you.

Prince Henry. What is it?
It is already granted.

Elsie. Promise me,
When we are gone from here, and on our way
Are journeying to Salerno, you will not,
By word or deed, endeavour to dissuade me
And turn me from my purpose, but remember
That as a pilgrim to the Holy City
Walks unmolested, and with thoughts of pardon
Occupied wholly, so would I approach
The gates of Heaven, in this great jubilee,
With my petition, putting off from me
All thoughts of earth, as shoes from off my feet.
Promise me this.

Prince Henry. Thy words fall from thy lips
Like roses from the lips of Angelo: and angels
Might stoop to pick them up!

Elsie. Will you not promise?

Prince Henry. If ever we depart upon this journey,
So long to one or both of us, I promise.

Elsie. Shall we not go, then? Have you lifted me
Into the air, only to hurl me back
Wounded upon the ground? and offered me
The waters of eternal life, to bid me
Drink the polluted puddles of this world?

Prince Henry. O Elsie! what a lesson thou dost teach me!
The life which is, and that which is to come,
Suspended hang in such nice equipoise,
A breath disturbs the balance; and that scale
In which we throw our hearts preponderates,
And the other, like an empty one, flies up
And is accounted vanity and air!
To me the thought of death is terrible,
Having such hold on life. To thee it is not
So much even as the lifting of a latch;
Only a step into the open air
Out of a tent already luminous
With light that shines through its transparent walls.
O pure in heart! from thy sweet dust shall grow
Lilies, upon whose petals will be written
"Ave Maria" in characters of gold!

III

A street in Strasburg. Night. PRINCE HENRY *wandering alone, wrapped in a cloak.*

Prince Henry. Still is the night. The sound of feet
Has died away from the empty street;
And like an artisan, bending down
His head on his anvil, the dark town
Sleeps, with a slumber deep and sweet.
Sleepless and restless, I alone,
In the dusk and damp of these walls of stone,
Wander and weep in my remorse!

Crier of the Dead (*ringing a bell*).

Wake ! wake !
All ye that sleep !
Pray for the Dead !
Pray for the Dead !

Prince Henry. Hark ! with what accents loud and hoarse
This warder on the walls of death
Sends forth the challenge of his breath !
I see the dead that sleep in the grave !
They rise up, and their garments wave,
Dimly and spectral, as they rise
With the light of another world in their eyes !

Crier of the Dead.

Wake ! wake !
All ye that sleep !
Pray for the Dead !
Pray for the Dead !

Prince Henry. Why for the dead, who are at rest ?
Pray for the living, in whose breast
The struggle between right and wrong
Is raging terrible and strong,
As when good angels war with devils !
This is the Master of the Revels,
Who, at Life's flowing feast, proposes
The health of absent friends, and pledges,
Not in bright goblets crowned with roses,
And tinkling as we touch their edges,
But with his dismal, tinkling bell,
That mocks and mimics their funeral knell !

Crier of the Dead.

Wake ! wake!
All ye that sleep !
Pray for the Dead !
Pray for the Dead !

Prince Henry. Wake not, belovèd ! be thy sleep
Silent as night is, and as deep !
There walks a sentinel at thy gate
Whose heart is heavy and desolate,
And the heavings of whose bosom number
The respirations of thy slumber,
As if some strange, mysterious fate
Had linked two hearts in one, and mine
Went madly wheeling about thine,
Only with wider and wilder sweep !

Crier of the Dead (at a distance).

Wake ! wake !
All ye that sleep !
Pray for the Dead !
Pray for the Dead !

Prince Henry. Lo ! with what depth of blackness thrown
Against the clouds, far up the skies
The walls of the cathedral rise,
Like a mysterious grove of stone,
With fitful lights and shadows blending,
As from behind, the moon, ascending,
Lights its dim aisles and paths unknown !
The wind is rising ; but the boughs
Rise not and fall not with the wind
That through their foliage sobs and soughs ;
Only the cloudy rack behind,
Drifting onward, wild and ragged,
Gives to each spire and buttress jagged
A seeming motion undefined.
Below on the square, an armed knight,
Still as a statue and as white,
Sits on his steed, and the moonbeams quiver
Upon the points of his armour bright
As on the ripples of a river.
He lifts the visor from his cheek,
And beckons, and makes as he would speak.

Walter (*the Minnesinger*). Friend! can you tell me where alight
Thuringia's horsemen for the night?
For I have lingered in the rear,
And wander vainly up and down.
Prince Henry. I am a stranger in the town,
As thou art; but the voice I hear
Is not a stranger to mine ear.
Thou art Walter of the Vogelweid!
Walter. Thou hast guessed rightly, and thy name
Is Henry of Hoheneck!
Prince Henry. Ay, the same.
Walter (*embracing him*). Come closer, closer to my side!
What brings thee hither? What potent charm
Has drawn thee from thy German farm
Into the old Alsatian city?
Prince Henry. A tale of wonder and of pity!
A wretched man, almost by stealth
Dragging my body to Salern,
In the vain hope and search for health,
And destined never to return.
Already thou hast heard the rest.
But what brings thee, thus armed and dight
In the equipments of a knight?
Walter. Dost thou not see upon my breast
The cross of the Crusaders shine?
My pathway leads to Palestine.
Prince Henry. Ah, would that way were also mine.
O noble poet! thou whose heart
Is like a nest of singing-birds
Rocked on the topmost bough of life.
Wilt thou, too, from our sky depart,
And in the clangour of the strife
Mingle the music of thy words?
Walter. My hopes are high, my heart is proud,
And like a trumpet long and loud,
Thither my thoughts all clang and ring!
My life is in my hand, and lo!
I grasp and bend it as a bow,

And shoot forth from its trembling string
An arrow, that shall be, perchance,
Like the arrow of the Israelite king
Shot from the window toward the east,
That of the Lord's deliverance!

Prince Henry. My life, alas! is what thou seest.
O enviable fate! to be
Strong, beautiful, and armed like thee
With lyre and sword, with song and steel;
A hand to smite, a heart to feel!
Thy heart, thy hand, thy lyre, thy sword,
Thou givest all unto thy Lord;
While I, so mean and abject grown,
Am thinking of myself alone.

Walter. Be patient: Time will reinstate
Thy health and fortunes.

Prince Henry. 'Tis too late!
I cannot strive against my fate!

Walter. Come with me; for my steed is weary;
Our journey has been long and dreary,
And, dreaming of his stall, he dints
With his impatient hoofs the flints.

Prince Henry (*aside*). I am ashamed, in my disgrace,
To look into that noble face!
To-morrow, Walter, let it be.

Walter. To-morrow, at the dawn of day,
I shall again be on my way.
Come with me to the hostelry,
For I have many things to say.
Our journey into Italy
Perchance together we may make;
Wilt thou not do it for my sake?

Prince Henry. A sick man's pace would but impede
Thine eager and impatient speed.
Besides, my pathway leads me round
To Hirschau, in the forest's bound,
Where I assemble man and steed,
And all things for my journey's need.

[*They go out.*]

Lucifer (*flying over the city*). Sleep, sleep, O city! till the light
Wakes you to sin and crime again,
Whilst on your dreams, like dismal rain,
I scatter downward through the night
My maledictions dark and deep.
I have more martyrs in your walls
Than God has; and they cannot sleep;
They are my bondsmen and my thralls;
Their wretched lives are full of pain,
Wild agonies of nerve and brain;
And every heart-beat, every breath,
Is a convulsion worse than death!
Sleep, sleep, O city! though within
The circuit of your walls there lies
No habitation free from sin,
And all its nameless misery;
The aching heart, the aching head,
Grief for the living and the dead,
And foul corruption of the time,
Disease, distress, and want, and woe,
And crimes, and passions that may grow
Until they ripen into crime!

Square in front of the Cathedral. Easter Sunday. FRIAR CUTHBERT *preaching to the crowd from pulpit in the open air.* PRINCE HENRY *and* ELSIE *crossing the square.*

Prince Henry. This is the day when from the dead
Our Lord arose; and everywhere,
Out of their darkness and despair,
Triumphant over fears and foes,
The hearts of his disciples rose;
When to the women, standing near,
The Angel in shining vesture said,
"The Lord is risen; he is not here!"
And, mindful that the day is come,
On all the hearths in Christendom

The fires are quenched, to be again
Rekindled from the sun, that high
Is dancing in the cloudless sky.
The churches are all decked with flowers,
The salutations among men
Are but the Angel's words divine,
"Christ is arisen!" and the bells
Catch the glad murmur, as it swells,
And chant together in their towers.
All hearts are glad; and free from care
The faces of the people shine.
See what a crowd is in the square,
Gaily and gallantly arrayed!

Elsie. Let us go back; I am afraid.

Prince Henry. Nay, let us mount the church-steps here,
Under the doorway's sacred shadow;
We can see all things, and be freer
From the crowd that madly heaves and presses!

Elsie. What a gay pageant! what bright dresses!
It looks like a flower-besprinkled meadow.
What is that yonder on the square?

Prince Henry. A pulpit in the open air,
And a Friar, who is preaching to the crowd
In a voice so deep and clear and loud,
That, if we listen, and give heed,
His lowest words will reach the ear.

Friar Cuthbert (*gesticulating and cracking a postilion's whip*).

What ho! good people! do you not hear?
Dashing along at the top of his speed,
Booted and spurred, on his jaded steed,
A courier comes with words of cheer.
Courier! what is the news, I pray?
"Christ is arisen!" Whence come you? "From Court."
Then I do not believe it; you say it in sport.
[*Cracks his whip again.*]

Ah, here comes another, riding this way;
We soon shall know what he has to say.
Courier! what are the tidings to-day?
"Christ is arisen!" Whence come you? "From Town."
Then I do not believe it; away with you, clown.
[*Cracks his whip more violently.*]
And here comes a third, who is spurring amain.
What news do you bring, with your loose-hanging rein,
Your spurs wet with blood, and your bridle with foam?
"Christ is arisen!" Whence come you? "From Rome."
Ah, now I believe. He is risen, indeed.
Ride on with the news, at the top of your speed!
[*Great applause among the crowd.*]
To come back to my text![1] When the news was first spread
That Christ was arisen indeed from the dead,
Very great was the joy of the angels in heaven;
And as great the dispute as to who should carry
The tidings thereof to the Virgin Mary,
Pierced to the heart with sorrows seven.
Old father Adam was first to propose,
As being the author of all our woes;
But he was refused, for fear, said they,
He would stop to eat apples on the way!
Abel came next, but petitioned in vain,
Because he might meet with his brother Cain!
Noah, too, was refused, lest his weakness for wine
Should delay him at every tavern-sign;
And John the Baptist could not get a vote,
On account of his old-fashioned, camel's-hair coat;
And the Penitent Thief, who died on the cross,
Was reminded that all his bones were broken!
Till at last, when each in turn had spoken,
The company being still at a loss,
The Angel, who rolled away the stone,

[1] See Appendix.

Was sent to the sepulchre, all alone,
And filled with glory that gloomy prison,
And said to the Virgin, "The Lord is arisen!"

[*The Cathedral bells ring.*]

But hark! the bells are beginning to chime;
And I feel that I am growing hoarse.
I will put an end to my discourse,
And leave the rest for some other time.
For the bells themselves are the best of preachers;
Their brazen lips are learned teachers,
From their pulpits of stone, in the upper air,
Sounding aloft, without crack or flaw,
Shriller than trumpets under the Law,
Now a sermon, and now a prayer.
The clangorous hammer is the tongue,
This way, that way, beaten and swung,
That from Mouth of Brass, as from Mouth of Gold,
May be taught the Testaments, New and Old.
And above it the great cross-beam of wood
Representeth the Holy Rood,
Upon which, like the bell, our hopes are hung.
And the wheel wherewith it is swayed and rung
Is the mind of man, that round and round
Sways and maketh the tongue to sound!
And the rope, with its twisted cordage three,
Denoteth the Scriptural Trinity
Of Morals, and Symbols, and History;
And the upward and downward motions show
That we touch upon matters high and low;
And the constant change and transmutation
Of action and of contemplation,
Downward, the Scripture brought from on high,
Upward, exalted again to the sky;
Downward, the literal interpretation,
Upward, the Vision and Mystery!

And now, my hearers, to make an end,
I have only one word more to say;
In the church, in honour of Easter Day,
Will be represented a Miracle-Play;

And I hope you will all have the grace to attend.
Christ bring us at last to his felicity!
Pax vobiscum! et Benedicite!

In the Cathedral.

CHANT.

Kyrie Eleison!
Christe Eleison!

Elsie. I am at home here in my Father's house!
These paintings of the Saints upon the walls
Have all familiar and benignant faces.
Prince Henry. The portraits of the family of God!
Thine own hereafter shall be placed among them.
Elsie. How very grand it is and wonderful!
Never have I beheld a church so splendid!
Such columns, and such arches, and such windows,
So many tombs and statues in the chapels,
And under them so many confessionals.
They must be for the rich. I should not like
To tell my sins in such a church as this.
Who built it?
Prince Henry. A great master of his craft,
Erwin von Steinbach; but not he alone,
For many generations laboured with him.
Children that came to see these Saints in stone,
As day by day out of the blocks they rose,
Grew old and died, and still the work went on,
And on, and on, and is not yet completed.
The generation that succeeds our own
Perhaps may finish it. The architect
Built his great heart into these sculptured stones,
And with him toiled his children, and their lives
Were builded, with his own, into the walls,

As offerings unto God. You see that statue
Fixing its joyous, but deep-wrinkled eyes
Upon the Pillar of the Angels yonder.
That is the image of the master, carved
By the fair hand of his own child, Sabina.

Elsie. How beautiful is the column that he looks at!

Prince Henry. That, too, she sculptured. At the base of it
Stand the Evangelists; above their heads
Four angels blowing upon marble trumpets,
And over them the blessed Christ, surrounded
By his attendant ministers, upholding
The instruments of his passion.

Elsie. O my Lord!
Would I could leave behind me upon earth
Some monument to thy glory, such as this!

Prince Henry. A greater monument than this thou leavest
In thine own life, all purity and love!
See, too, the Rose, above the western portal
Resplendent with a thousand gorgeous colours,
The perfect flower of Gothic loveliness!

Elsie. And, in the gallery, the long line of statues,
Christ with his twelve Apostles watching us.

[*A* Bishop *in armour, booted and spurred, passes with his train.*]

Prince Henry. But come away; we have not time to look.
The crowd already fills the church, and yonder,
Upon a stage, a herald with a trumpet,
Clad like the Angel Gabriel, proclaims
The Mystery that will now be represented.

THE NATIVITY

A Miracle-Play [1]

INTROITUS.

Præco. Come, good people, all and each
Come and listen to our speech!
In your presence here I stand,
With a trumpet in my hand,
To announce the Easter Play,
Which we represent to-day.
First of all, we shall rehearse,
In our action and our verse,
The Nativity of our Lord,
As written in the old record
Of the Protevangelion,
So that he who reads may run!
[*Blows his trumpet.*]

I. HEAVEN.

Mercy (*at the feet of God*). Have pity, Lord! be not afraid
To save mankind, whom thou hast made,
Nor let the souls that were betrayed
Perish eternally!
Justice. It cannot be, it must not be!

[1] A singular chapter in the history of the Middle Ages is that which gives account of the early Christian Drama, the Mysteries, Moralities, and Miracle-Plays, which were at first performed in churches, and afterwards in the streets, on fixed or movable stages. For the most part the Mysteries were founded on the historic portions of the Old and New Testaments, and the Miracle-Plays on the lives of saints; a distinction not always observed, however, for in Mr. Wright's *Early Mysteries and other Latin Poems of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*, the Resurrection of Lazarus is called a Miracle, and not a Mystery. The Moralities were plays, in which the Virtues and Vices were personified. See Appendix.

When in the garden placed by thee,
The fruit of the forbidden tree
He ate, and he must die!
Mercy. Have pity, Lord! let penitence
Atone for disobedience,
Nor let the fruit of man's offence
Be endless misery!
Justice. What penitence proportionate
Can e'er be felt for sin so great?
Of the forbidden fruit he ate,
And damnèd must he be!
God. He shall be saved, if that within
The bounds of earth one free from sin
Be found, who for his kith and kin
Will suffer martyrdom.
The Four Virtues. Lord! we have searched the world around,
From centre to the utmost bound,
But no such mortal can be found;
Despairing, back we come.
Wisdom. No mortal, but a God-made man,
Can ever carry out this plan,
Achieving what none other can,
Salvation unto all!
God. Go, then, O my beloved Son!
It can by thee alone be done;
By thee the victory shall be won
O'er Satan and the Fall!

[*Here the* Angel Gabriel *shall leave Paradise and fly towards the earth; the jaws of Hell open below, and the Devils walk about, making a great noise.*]

II. MARY AT THE WELL.

Mary. Along the garden walk, and thence
Through the wicket in the garden fence,
I steal with quiet pace,
My pitcher at the well to fill,
That lies so deep and cool and still
In this sequestered place.

These sycamores keep guard around;
I see no face, I hear no sound,
Save bubblings of the spring,
And my companions, who within
The threads of gold and scarlet spin,
And at their labour sing.

The Angel Gabriel. Hail, Virgin Mary, full of grace!

[*Here* MARY *looketh around her, trembling, and then saith.*]

Mary. Who is it speaketh in this place,
With such a gentle voice?

Gabriel. The Lord of heaven is with thee now!
Blessed among all women thou,
Who art his holy choice!

Mary (*setting down the pitcher*). What can this mean? No one is near,
And yet such sacred words I hear,
I almost fear to stay.

[*Here the* ANGEL, *appearing to her, shall say.*]

Gabriel. Fear not, O Mary! but believe!
For thou, a Virgin, shalt conceive
A child this very day.
Fear not, O Mary! from the sky
The Majesty of the Most High
Shall overshadow thee!

Mary. Behold the handmaid of the Lord!
According to thy holy word,
So be it unto me!

[*Here the Devils shall again make a great noise under the stage.*]

III. THE ANGELS OF THE SEVEN PLANETS, BEARING THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

The Angels. The Angels of the Planets Seven,
Across the shining fields of heaven
The natal star we bring!

Dropping our sevenfold virtues down,
As priceless jewels in the crown
Of Christ, our new-born King.
Raphael. I am the Angel of the Sun,
Whose flaming wheels began to run
When God's almighty breath
Said to the Darkness and the Night,
Let there be light! and there was light!
I bring the gift of Faith.
Gabriel. I am the Angel of the Moon,
Darkened, to be rekindled soon
Beneath the azure cope!
Nearest to earth, it is my ray
That best illumes the midnight way.
I bring the gift of Hope!
Angel. The Angel of the Star of Love,
The Evening Star, that shines above
The place where lovers be,
Above all happy hearths and homes,
On roofs of thatch, or golden domes,
I give him Charity!
Zobiachel. The Planet Jupiter is mine!
The mightiest star of all that shine,
Except the sun alone!
He is the High Priest of the Dove,
And sends, from his great throne above,
Justice, that shall atone!
Michael. The Planet Mercury, whose place
Is nearest to the sun in space,
Is my allotted sphere!
And with celestial ardour swift
I bear upon my hands the gift
Of heavenly Prudence here!
Uriel. I am the Minister of Mars,
The strongest star among the stars!
My songs of power prelude
The march and battle of man's life,
And for the suffering and the strife,
I give him Fortitude!
Orifel. The Angel of the uttermost

Of all the shining, heavenly host,
From the far-off expanse
Of the Saturnian, endless space
I bring the last, the crowning grace,
The gift of Temperance!
[*A sudden light shines from the windows of the stable in the village below.*]

IV. THE WISE MEN OF THE EAST

The stable of the Inn. The VIRGIN *and* CHILD. *Three Gipsy Kings,* GASPAR, MELCHIOR, *and* BELSHAZZAR, *shall come in.*

Gaspar. Hail to thee, Jesus of Nazareth!
Though in a manger thou drawest thy breath,
Thou art greater than Life and Death,
Greater than Joy or Woe!
This cross upon the line of life
Portendeth struggle, toil, and strife,
And through a region with peril rife
In darkness shalt thou go!
Melchior. Hail to thee, King of Jerusalem!
Though humbly born in Bethlehem,
A sceptre and a diadem
Await thy brow and hand!
The sceptre is a simple reed,
The crown will make thy temples bleed,
And in thy hour of greatest need,
Abashed thy subjects stand!
Belshazzar. Hail to thee, Christ of Christendom!
O'er all the earth thy kingdom come!
From distant Trebizond to Rome
Thy name shall men adore!
Peace and good-will among all men,
The Virgin has returned again,
Returned the old Saturnian reign
And Golden Age once more.

The Child Christ. Jesus, the Son of God, am I,
Born here to suffer and to die
According to the prophecy,
That other men may live!
The Virgin. And now these clothes, that wrapped him, take,
And keep them precious, for his sake,
Our benediction thus we make,
Naught else have we to give.
[*She gives them swaddling-clothes, and they depart.*]

V. THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

[*Here shall* JOSEPH *come in, leading an ass, on which are seated* MARY *and the* CHILD.]

Mary. Here will we rest us under these
O'erhanging branches of the trees,
Where robins chant their Litanies,
And canticles of Joy.
Joseph. My saddle-girths have given way
With trudging through the heat to-day;
To you I think it is but play
To ride and hold the boy.
Mary. Hark! how the robins shout and sing,
As if to hail their infant King!
I will alight at yonder spring
To wash his little coat.
Joseph. And I will hobble well the ass,
Lest, being loose upon the grass,
He should escape; for, by the mass,
He is nimble as a goat.
[*Here* MARY *shall alight and go to the spring.*]
Mary. O Joseph! I am much afraid,
For men are sleeping in the shade;
I fear that we shall be waylaid,
And robbed and beaten sore!
[*Here a band of robbers shall be seen sleeping, two of whom shall rise and come forward.*]

Dumachus. Cock's soul! deliver up your gold!
Joseph. I pray you, Sirs, let go your hold!
You see that I am weak and old,
Of wealth I have no store.
Dumachus. Give up your money!
Titus. Prithee cease.
Let these good people go in peace.
Dumachus. First let them pay for their release,
And then go on their way.
Titus. These forty groats I give in fee,
If thou wilt only silent be.
Mary. May God be merciful to thee
Upon the Judgment Day!
Jesus. When thirty years shall have gone by,
I at Jerusalem shall die,
By Jewish hands exalted high
On the accursed tree.
Then on my right and my left side,
These thieves shall both be crucified,
And Titus thenceforth shall abide
In paradise with me.
[*Here a great rumour of trumpets and horses, like the noise of a king with his army, and the robbers shall take flight.*]

VI. THE SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS

King Herod. Potz-tausend! Himmel-sacrament!
Filled am I with great wonderment
At this unwelcome news!
Am I not Herod? Who shall dare
My crown to take, my sceptre bear,
As king among the Jews!
[*Here he shall stride up and down and flourish his sword.*]
What ho! I fain would drink a can
Of the strong wine of Canaan!
The wine of Helbon bring,
I purchased at the Fair of Tyre,

As red as blood, as hot as fire,
And fit for any king !
[*He quaffs great goblets of wine.*]
Now at the window will I stand,
While in the street the armed band
The little children slay :
The babe just born in Bethlehem
Will surely slaughtered be with them,
Nor live another day !
[*Here a voice of lamentation shall be heard in the street.*]
Rachel. O wicked king ! O cruel speed !
To do this most unrighteous deed !
My children are all slain !
Herod. Ho, seneschal ! another cup !
With wine of Sorek fill it up !
I would a bumper drain !
Rahab. May maledictions fall and blast
Thyself and lineage, to the last
Of all thy kith and kin !
Herod. Another goblet ! quick ! and stir
Pomegranate juice and drops of myrrh
And calamus therein !
Soldiers (*in the street*). Give up thy child into our hands !
It is King Herod who commands
That he should thus be slain !
The Nurse Medusa. O monstrous men ! What have ye done !
It is King Herod's only son
That ye have cleft in twain !
Herod. Ah, luckless day ! What words of fear
Are these that smite upon my ear
With such a doleful sound !
What torments rack my heart and head !
Would I were dead ! would I were dead !
And buried in the ground !
[*He falls down and writhes as though eaten by worms. Hell opens, and* SATAN *and* ASTAROTH *come forth and drag him down.*]

VII. JESUS AT PLAY WITH HIS SCHOOLMATES

Jesus. The shower is over. Let us play.
And make some sparrows out of clay,
Down by the river's side.

Judas. See, how the stream has overflowed
Its banks, and o'er the meadow road
Is spreading far and wide!

[*They draw water out of the river by channels, and from little pools.* JESUS *makes twelve sparrows of clay, and the other boys do the same.*]

Jesus. Look! look! how prettily I make
These little sparrows by the lake
Bend down their necks and drink!
Now will I make them sing and soar
So far, they shall return no more
Unto this river's brink.

Judas. That canst thou not! They are but clay,
They cannot sing, nor fly away
Above the meadow lands!

Jesus. Fly, fly! ye sparrows! ye are free!
And while you live, remember me,
Who made you with my hands.

[*Here* JESUS *shall clap his hands, and the sparrows shall fly away, chirruping.*]

Judas. Thou art a sorcerer, I know;
Oft has my mother told me so,
I will not play with thee!

[*He strikes* JESUS *on the right side.*]

Jesus. Ah, Judas! thou hast smote my side,
And when I shall be crucified,
There shall I pierced be!

[*Here* JOSEPH *shall come in and say.*]

Joseph. Ye wicked boys! Why do ye play,
And break the holy Sabbath day?
What, think ye, will your mothers say
To see you in such plight!
In such a sweat and such a heat,

With all that mud upon your feet!
There's not a beggar in the street
Makes such a sorry sight!

VIII. THE VILLAGE SCHOOL

The RABBI BEN ISRAEL, *with a long beard, sitting on a high stool, with a rod in his hand.*

Rabbi. I am the Rabbi Ben Israel,
Throughout this village known full well,
And, as my scholars all will tell,
Learned in things divine;
The Cabala and Talmud hoar
Than all the prophets prize I more,
For water is all Bible lore,
But Mishna is strong wine.

My fame extends from West to East,
And always, at the Purim feast,
I am as drunk as any beast
That wallows in his sty;
The wine it so elateth me,
That I no difference can see
Between "Accursed Haman be!"
And "Blessed be Mordecai!"

Come hither, Judas Iscariot.
Say, if thy lesson thou hast got
From the Rabbinical Book or not.
Why howl the dogs at night?
Judas. In the Rabbinical Book, it saith
The dogs howl, when, with icy breath,
Great Sammaël, the Angel of Death,
Takes through the town his flight!
Rabbi. Well, boy! now say, if thou art wise,
When the Angel of Death, who is full of eyes,
Comes where a sick man dying lies,
What doth he to the wight?
Judas. He stands beside him, dark and tall,
Holding a sword from which doth fall

Into his mouth a drop of gall,
And so he turneth white.
Rabbi. And now, my Judas, say to me,
What the great Voices Four may be,
That quite across the world do flee,
And are not heard by men?
Judas. The Voice of the Sun in heaven's dome,
The Voice of the Murmuring of Rome,
The Voice of a Soul that goeth home,
And the Angel of the Rain!
Rabbi. Right are thine answers every one!
Now, little Jesus, the carpenter's son,
Let us see how thy task is done.
Canst thou thy letters say?
Jesus. Aleph.
Rabbi. What next! Do not stop yet!
Go on with all the alphabet.
Come, Aleph, Beth; dost thou forget?
Cock's soul! thou'dst rather play!
Jesus. What Aleph means I fain would know,
Before I any farther go!
Rabbi. O, by St. Peter! wouldst thou so?
Come hither, boy, to me.
As surely as the letter Jod
Once cried aloud, and spake to God,
So surely shalt thou feel this rod,
And punished shalt thou be!

[*Here* Rabbi ben Israel *shall lift up his rod to strike* Jesus, *and his right arm shall be paralysed.*]

IX. CROWNED WITH FLOWERS

Jesus *sitting among his playmates, crowned with flowers as their King.*

Boys. We spread our garments on the ground!
With fragrant flowers thy head is crowned,
While like a guard we stand around,
And hail thee as our King!
Thou art the new King of the Jews!
Nor let the passers-by refuse

To bring that homage which men use
To majesty to bring.

[*Here a traveller shall go by, and the boys shall lay hold of his garments, and say.*]

Boys. Come hither ! and all reverence pay
Unto our monarch crowned to-day !
Then go rejoicing on your way,
In all prosperity !

Traveller. Hail to the King of Bethlehem,
Who weareth in his diadem
The yellow crocus for the gem
Of his authority !

[*He passes by ; and others come in, bearing on a litter a sick child.*]

Boys. Set down the litter and draw near !
The King of Bethlehem is here !
What ails the child, who seems to fear
That we shall do him harm ?

The Bearers. He climbed up to the Robin's nest,
And out there darted, from his rest,
A serpent with a crimson crest,
And stung him in the arm.

Jesus. Bring him to me, and let me feel
The wounded place ; my touch can heal
The sting of serpents, and can steal
The poison from the bite !

[*He touches the wound, and the boy begins to cry.*]

Cease to lament ! I can foresee
That thou hereafter known shall be,
Among the men who follow me,
As Simon the Canaanite !

EPILOGUE

In the after part of the day
Will be represented another play,
Of the passion of our Blessed Lord,
Beginning directly after Nones !
At the close of which we shall accord,
By way of benison and reward,
The sight of a holy Martyr's bones !

IV

The road to Hirschau. PRINCE HENRY *and* ELSIE, *with their attendants, on horseback.*

Elsie. Onward and onward the highway runs to
the distant city, impatiently bearing
Tidings of human joy and disaster, of love and of
hate, of doing and daring!
Prince Henry. This life of ours is a wild Æolian
harp of many a joyous strain,
But under them all there runs a loud perpetual
wail, as of souls in pain.
Elsie. Faith alone can interpret life, and the
heart that aches and bleeds with the stigma
Of pain, alone bears the likeness of Christ, and
can comprehend its dark enigma.
Prince Henry. Man is selfish, and seeketh plea-
sure with little care of what may betide;
Else why am I travelling here beside thee, a demon
that rides by an angel's side?
Elsie. All the hedges are white with dust, and the
great dog under the creaking wain
Hangs his head in the lazy heat, while onward the
horses toil and strain.
Prince Henry. Now they stop at the way-side inn,
and the waggoner laughs with the landlord's
daughter,
While out of the dripping trough the horses distend
their leathern sides with water.
Elsie. All through life there are way-side inns,
where man may refresh his soul with love;
Even the lowest may quench his thirst at rivulets
fed by springs from above.
Prince Henry. Yonder, where rises the cross of
stone, our journey along the highway ends,
And over the fields, by a bridle path, down into the
broad green valley descends.

Elsie. I am not sorry to leave behind the beaten
road with its dust and heat;
The air will be sweeter far, and the turf will be
softer under our horses' feet.

[*They turn down a green lane.*]

Elsie. Sweet is the air with the budding haws,
and the valley, stretching for miles below,
Is white with blossoming cherry-trees, as if just
covered with lightest snow.

Prince Henry. Over our heads a white cascade is
gleaming against the distant hill;
We cannot hear it, nor see it move, but it hangs
like a banner when winds are still.

Elsie. Damp and cool is this deep ravine, and cool
the sound of the brook by our side!
What is this castle that rises above us, and lords it
over a land so wide?

Prince Henry. It is the home of the Counts of
Calva; well have I known these scenes of old,
Well I remember each tower and turret, remember
the brooklet, the wood, and the wold.

Elsie. Hark! from the little village below us the
bells of the church are ringing for rain!
Priests and peasants in long procession come forth
and kneel on the arid plain.

Prince Henry. They have not long to wait, for I
see in the south uprising a little cloud,
That before the sun shall be set will cover the sky
above us as with a shroud.

[*They pass on.*]

The Convent of Hirschau in the Black Forest. The Convent cellar. Friar Claus *comes in with a light and a basket of empty flagons.*

Friar Claus. I always enter this sacred place
With a thoughtful, solemn, and reverent pace,
Pausing long enough on each stair
To breathe an ejaculatory prayer,
And a benediction of the vines
That produce these various sorts of wines!

For my part, I am well content
That we have got through with the tedious Lent!
Fasting is all very well for those
Who have to contend with invisible foes;
But I am quite sure it does not agree
With a quiet, peaceful man like me,
Who am not of that nervous and meagre kind
That are always distressed in body and mind!
And at times it really does me good
To come down among this brotherhood,
Dwelling for ever under ground,
Silent, contemplative, round and sound;
Each one old, and brown with mould,
But filled to the lips with the ardour of youth,
With the latent power and love of truth,
And with virtues fervent and manifold.

I have heard it said, that at Easter-tide,
When buds are swelling on every side,
And the sap begins to move in the vine,
Then in all cellars, far and wide,
The oldest, as well as the newest, wine
Begins to stir itself, and ferment,
With a kind of revolt and discontent
At being so long in darkness pent,
And fain would burst from its sombre tun
To bask on the hill-side in the sun;
As in the bosom of us poor friars,
The tumult of half-subdued desires
For the world that we have left behind
Disturbs at times all peace of mind!
And now that we have lived through Lent,
My duty it is, as often before,
To open awhile the prison-door,
And give these restless spirits vent.

Now here is a cask that stands alone,
And has stood a hundred years or more,
Its beard of cobwebs, long and hoar,
Trailing and sweeping along the floor,

Like Barbarossa, who sits in his cave,
Taciturn, sombre, sedate, and grave,
Till his beard has grown through the table of stone!
It is of the quick, and not of the dead!
In its veins the blood is hot and red,
And a heart still beats in those ribs of oak
That time may have tamed, but has not broke.
It comes from Bacharach on the Rhine,
Is one of the three best kinds of wine,
And costs some hundred florins the ohm;
But that I do not consider dear,
When I remember that every year
Four butts are sent to the Pope of Rome,
And whenever a goblet thereof I drain,
The old rhyme keeps running in my brain:

At Bacharach on the Rhine,
At Hochheim on the Main,
And at Würzburg on the Stein,
Grow the three best kinds of wine!

They are all good wines, and better far
Than those of the Neckar, or those of the Ahr.
In particular, Würzburg well may boast
Of its blessed wine of the Holy Ghost,
Which of all wines I like the most.
This I shall draw for the Abbot's drinking,
Who seems to be much of my way of thinking.

[*Fills a flagon.*]

Ah! how the streamlet laughs and sings!
What a delicious fragrance springs
From the deep flagon, while it fills,
As of hyacinths and daffodils!
Between this cask and the Abbot's lips
Many have been the sips and slips;
Many have been the draughts of wine,
On their way to his, that have stopped at mine;
And many a time my soul has hankered
For a deep draught out of his silver tankard,
When it should have been busy with other affairs,
Less with its longings and more with its prayers.

But now there is no such awkward condition,
No danger of death and eternal perdition;
So here's to the Abbot and Brothers all,
Who dwell in this convent of Peter and Paul!

[*He drinks.*]

O cordial delicious! O soother of pain!
It flashes like sunshine into my brain!
A benison rest on the Bishop who sends
Such a fudder of wine as this to his friends.
And now a flagon for such as may ask
A draught from the noble Bacharach cask,
And I will be gone, though I know full well
The cellar's a cheerfuller place than the cell.
Behold where he stands, all sound and good,
Brown and old in his oaken hood;
Silent he seems externally
As any Carthusian monk may be;
But within, what a spirit of deep unrest!
What a seething and simmering in his breast!
As if the heaving of his great heart
Would burst his belt of oak apart!
Let me unloose this button of wood,
And quiet a little his turbulent mood.

[*Sets it running.*]

See! how its currents gleam and shine,
As if they had caught the purple hues
Of autumn sunsets on the Rhine,
Descending and mingling with the dews;
Or as if the grapes were stained with the blood
Of the innocent boy, who, some years back,
Was taken and crucified by the Jews,
In that ancient town of Bacharach;
Perdition upon those infidel Jews,
In that ancient town of Bacharach!
The beautiful town, that gives us wine
With the fragrant odour of Muscadine!
I should deem it wrong to let this pass
Without first touching my lips to the glass,
For here in the midst of the current I stand,
Like the stone Pfalz in the midst of the river,

Taking toll upon either hand,
And much more grateful to the giver.
[*He drinks.*]
Here, now, is a very inferior kind,
Such as in any town you may find,
Such as one might imagine would suit
The rascal who drank wine out of a boot.
And, after all, it was not a crime,
For he won thereby Dorf Hüffelsheim.
A jolly old toper ! who at a pull
Could drink a postilion's jack-boot full,
And ask with a laugh, when that was done,
If the fellow had left the other one !
This wine is as good as we can afford
To the friars, who sit at the lower board,
And cannot distinguish bad from good,
And are far better off than if they could,
Being rather the rude disciples of beer,
Than of anything more refined and dear !
[*Fills the other flagon and departs.*]

The Scriptorium.[1] Friar Pacificus *transcribing and illuminating.*

Friar Pacificus. It is growing dark ! Yet one line more,
And then my work for to-day is o'er.
I come again to the name of the Lord !
Ere I that awful name record,
That is spoken so lightly among men,
Let me pause awhile, and wash my pen ;
Pure from blemish and blot must it be
When it writes that word of mystery !

Thus have I laboured on and on,
Nearly through the Gospel of John.
Can it be that from the lips
Of this same gentle Evangelist,
That Christ himself perhaps has kissed,

[1] See Appendix.

Came the dread Apocalypse!
It has a very awful look,
As it stands there at the end of the book,
Like the sun in an eclipse.
Ah me! when I think of that vision divine,
Think of writing it, line by line,
I stand in awe of the terrible curse,
Like the trump of doom, in the closing verse.
God forgive me! If ever I
Take aught from the book of that Prophecy,
Lest my part too should be taken away
From the Book of Life on the Judgment Day.

This is well written, though I say it!
I should not be afraid to display it,
In open day, on the selfsame shelf
With the writings of St. Thecla herself,
Or of Theodosius, who of old
Wrote the Gospels in letters of gold!
That goodly folio standing yonder,
Without a single blot or blunder,
Would not bear away the palm from mine,
If we should compare them line for line.

There, now, is an initial letter!
Saint Ulric himself never made a better;
Finished down to the leaf and the snail,
Down to the eyes on the peacock's tail!
And now, as I turn the volume over,
And see what lies between cover and cover,
What treasures of art these pages hold,
All ablaze with crimson and gold,
God forgive me! I seem to feel
A certain satisfaction steal
Into my heart, and into my brain,
As if my talent had not lain
Wrapped in a napkin, and all in vain.
Yes, I might almost say to the Lord,
Here is a copy of thy Word,
Written out with much toil and pain;

Take it, O Lord, and let it be
As something I have done for thee!
[*He looks from the window.*]
How sweet the air is! How fair the scene!
I wish I had as lovely a green
To paint my landscapes and my leaves!
How the swallows twitter under the eaves!
There, now, there is one in her nest;
I can just catch a glimpse of her head and breast,
And will sketch her thus in her quiet nook,
For the margin of my Gospel book.
[*He makes a sketch.*]
I can see no more. Through the valley yonder
A shower is passing; I hear the thunder
Mutter its curses in the air,
The Devil's own and only prayer!
The dusty road is brown with rain,
And, speeding on with might and main,
Hitherward rides a gallant train.
They do not parley, they cannot wait,
But hurry in at the convent-gate.
What a fair lady! and beside her
What a handsome, graceful, noble rider!
Now she gives him her hand to alight;
They will beg shelter for the night.
I will go down to the corridor,
And try to see that face once more;
It will do for the face of some beautiful Saint,
Or for one of the Maries I shall paint.
[*Goes out.*]

The Cloisters. *The* ABBOT ERNESTUS *pacing to and fro.*

Abbot. Slowly, slowly up the wall
Steals the sunshine, steals the shade;
Evening damps begin to fall,
Evening shadows are displayed.
Round me, o'er me, everywhere,
All the sky is grand with clouds,

And athwart the evening air
Wheel the swallows home in crowds.
Shafts of sunshine from the west
Paint the dusky windows red;
Darker shadows, deeper rest,
Underneath and overhead.
Darker, darker, and more wan,
In my breast the shadows fall;
Upward steals the life of man,
As the sunshine from the wall.
From the wall into the sky,
From the roof along the spire;
Ah, the souls of those that die
Are but sunbeams lifted higher.

Enter PRINCE HENRY.

Prince Henry. Christ is arisen!
Abbot. Amen! he is arisen!
His peace be with you!
Prince Henry. Here it reigns for ever.
The peace of God, that passeth understanding,
Reigns in these cloisters and these corridors.
Are you Ernestus, Abbot of the Convent?
Abbot. I am.
Prince Henry. And I Prince Henry of Hoheneck,
Who crave your hospitality to-night.
Abbot. You are thrice welcome to our humble walls.
You do us honour; and we shall requite it,
I fear, but poorly, entertaining you
With Paschal eggs, and our poor convent wine,
The remnants of our Easter holidays.
Prince Henry. How fares it with the holy monks of Hirschau?
Are all things well with them?
Abbot. All things are well.
Prince Henry. A noble convent! I have known it long
By the report of travellers. I now see
Their commendations lag behind the truth.

You lie here in the valley of the Nagold
As in a nest: and the still river, gliding
Along its bed, is like an admonition
How all things pass. Your lands are rich and ample,
And your revenues large. God's benediction
Rests on your convent.

Abbot. By our charities
We strive to merit it. Our Lord and Master,
When he departed, left us, in his will,
As our best legacy on earth, the poor!
These we have always with us; had we not,
Our hearts would grow as hard as are these stones.

Prince Henry. If I remember right, the Counts of Calva
Founded your convent.

Abbot. Even as you say.

Prince Henry. And, if I err not, it is very old.

Abbot. Within these cloisters lie already buried
Twelve holy Abbots. Underneath the flags
On which we stand, the Abbot William lies,
Of blessed memory.

Prince Henry. And whose tomb is that
Which bears the brass escutcheon?

Abbot. A benefactor's,
Conrad, a Count of Calva, he who stood
Godfather to our bells.

Prince Henry. Your monks are learned
And holy men, I trust.

Abbot. There are among them
Learned and holy men. Yet in this age
We need another Hildebrand, to shake
And purify us like a mighty wind.
The world is wicked, and sometimes I wonder
God does not lose his patience with it wholly,
And shatter it like glass! Even here, at times,
Within these walls, where all should be at peace,
I have my trials. Time has laid his hand
Upon my heart, gently, not smiting it,
But as a harper lays his open palm

Upon his harp, to deaden its vibrations.
Ashes are on my head, and on my lips
Sackcloth, and in my breast a heaviness
And weariness of life, that makes me ready
To say to the dead Abbots under us,
"Make room for me!" Only I see the dusk
Of evening twilight coming, and have not
Completed half my task; and so at times
The thought of my shortcomings in this life
Falls like a shadow on the life to come.

Prince Henry. We must all die, and not the old alone;
The young have no exemption from that doom.

Abbot. Ah, yes! the young may die, but the old must!
That is the difference.

Prince Henry. I have heard much laud
Of your transcribers. Your Scriptorium
Is famous among all, your manuscripts
Praised for their beauty and their excellence.

Abbot. That is indeed our boast. If you desire it,
You shall behold these treasures. And meanwhile
Shall the Refectorarius bestow
Your horses and attendants for the night.

[*They go in. The Vesper-bell rings.*]

The Chapel. Vespers; after which the monksretire, a chorister leading an old monk who is blind.

Prince Henry. They are all gone, save one who lingers,
Absorbed in deep and silent prayer.
As if his heart could find no rest,
At times he beats his heaving breast
With clenchèd and convulsive fingers,
Then lifts them trembling in the air.
A chorister, with golden hair,
Guides hitherward his heavy pace.
Can it be so? Or does my sight
Deceive me in the uncertain light?

Ah no! I recognise that face,
Though time has touched it in his flight,
And changed the auburn hair to white.
It is Count Hugo of the Rhine,
The deadliest foe of all our race,
And hateful unto me and mine!

The Blind Monk. Who is it that doth stand so near,
His whispered words I almost hear?

Prince Henry. I am Prince Henry of Hoheneck,
And you, Count Hugo of the Rhine!
I know you, and I see the scar,
The brand upon your forehead, shine
And redden like a baleful star!

The Blind Monk. Count Hugo once, but now the wreck
Of what I was. O Hoheneck!
The passionate will, the pride, the wrath
That bore me headlong on my path,
Stumbled and staggered into fear,
And failed me in my mad career,
As a tired steed some evil-doer,
Alone upon a desolate moor,
Bewildered, lost, deserted, blind,
And hearing loud and close behind
The o'ertaking steps of his pursuer.
Then suddenly from the dark there came
A voice that called me by my name,
And said to me, "Kneel down and pray!"
And so my terror passed away,
Passed utterly away for ever.
Contrition, penitence, remorse,
Came on me with o'erwhelming force;
A hope, a longing, an endeavour,
By days of penance and nights of prayer,
To frustrate and defeat despair!
Calm, deep, and still is now my heart,
With tranquil waters overflowed;
A lake whose unseen fountains start,
Where once the hot volcano glowed.
And you, O Prince of Hoheneck!

Have known me in that earlier time,
A man of violence and crime,
Whose passions brooked no curb nor check.
Behold me now, in gentler mood,
One of this holy brotherhood.
Give me your hand; here let me kneel;
Make your reproaches sharp as steel;
Spurn me, and smite me on each cheek;
No violence can harm the meek,
There is no wound Christ cannot heal!
Yes; lift your princely hand, and take
Revenge, if 'tis revenge you seek;
Then pardon me, for Jesus' sake!

Prince Henry. Arise, Count Hugo! let there be
No further strife nor enmity
Between us twain; we both have erred!
Too rash in act, too wroth in word,
From the beginning have we stood
In fierce, defiant attitude,
Each thoughtless of the other's right,
And each reliant on his might.
But now our souls are more subdued;
The hand of God, and not in vain,
Has touched us with the fire of pain.
Let us kneel down, and side by side
Pray, till our souls are purified,
And pardon will not be denied!

[*They kneel.*]

The Refectory. Gaudiolum of Monks at midnight. LUCIFER *disguised as a Friar.*

Friar Paul (*sings*).

Ave! color vini clari,
Dulcis potus, non amari,
Tua nos inebriari
Digneris potentia!

Friar Cuthbert. Not so much noise, my worthy frères,
You'll disturb the Abbot at his prayers.

Friar Paul (*sings*).

O ! quam placens in colore !
O ! quam fragrans in odore !
O ! quam sapidum in ore !
Dulce linguæ vinculum !

Friar Cuthbert. I should think your tongue had broken its chain !

Friar Paul (*sings*).

Felix venter quem intrabis !
Felix guttur quod rigabis !
Felix os quod tu lavabis !
Et beata labia !

Friar Cuthbert. Peace ! I say, peace !
Will you never cease ?
You will rouse up the Abbot, I tell you again !
Friar John. No danger ! to-night he will let us alone,
As I happen to know he has guests of his own.
Friar Cuthbert. Who are they ?
Friar John. A German Prince and his train,
Who arrived here just before the rain.
There is with him a damsel fair to see,
As slender and graceful as a reed !
When she alighted from her steed,
It seemed like a blossom blown from a tree.
Friar Cuthbert. None of your pale-faced girls for me !
None of your damsels of high degree !
Friar John. Come, old fellow, drink down to your peg !
But do not drink any further, I beg !

Friar Paul (*sings*).

In the days of gold,
The days of old,
Crozier of wood
And bishop of gold !

Friar Cuthbert. What an infernal racket and riot!
Can you not drink your wine in quiet?
Why fill the convent with such scandals,
As if we were so many drunken Vandals?

Friar Paul (*continues*).

Now we have changed
That law so good,
To crozier of gold
And bishop of wood!

Friar Cuthbert. Well, then, since you are in the mood
To give your noisy humours vent,
Sing and howl to your heart's content!

Chorus of Monks.

Funde vinum, funde!
Tanquam sint fluminis undæ
Nec quæras unde,
Sed fundas semper abunde!

Friar John. What is the name of yonder friar,
With an eye that glows like a coal of fire,
And such a black mass of tangled hair?
Friar Paul. He who is sitting there,
With a rollicking,
Devil may care,
Free and easy look and air,
As if he were used to such feasting and frolicking?
Friar John. The same.
Friar Paul. He's a stranger. You had better ask his name,
And where he is going, and whence he came.
Friar John. Hallo! Sir Friar!
Friar Paul. You must raise your voice a little higher;
He does not seem to hear what you say.
Now, try again! He is looking this way.
Friar John. Hallo! Sir Friar,

We wish to inquire
Whence you came, and where you are going,
And anything else that is worth the knowing.
So be so good as to open your head.

Lucifer. I am a Frenchman born and bred,
Going on a pilgrimage to Rome.
My home
Is the convent of St. Gildas de Rhuys,
Of which, very like, you never have heard.

Monks. Never a word!

Lucifer. You must know, then, it is in the diocese
Called the Diocese of Vannes,
In the province of Brittany.
From the grey rocks of Morbihan
It overlooks the angry sea;
The very sea-shore where,
In his great despair,
Abbot Abelard walked to and fro,
Filling the night with woe,
And wailing aloud to the merciless seas
The name of his sweet Heloise!
Whilst overhead
The convent windows gleamed as red
As the fiery eyes of the monks within,
Who with jovial din
Gave themselves up to all kinds of sin!
Ha! that is a convent! that is an abbey!
Over the doors
None of your death-heads carved in wood,
None of your Saints looking pious and good,
None of your Patriarchs old and shabby!
But the heads and tusks of boars,
And the cells
Hung all round with the fells
Of the fallow-deer.
And then what cheer!
What jolly, fat friars,
Sitting round the great, roaring fires,
Roaring louder than they,

With their strong wines,
And their concubines;
And never a bell,
With its swagger and swell,
Calling you up with a start of affright
In the dead of night,
To send you grumbling down dark stairs,
To mumble your prayers.
But the cheery crow
Of cocks in the yard below,
After daybreak, an hour or so,
And the barking of deep-mouthed hounds,
These are the sounds
That, instead of bells, salute the ear.
And then all day
Up and away
Through the forest, hunting the deer!
Ah, my friends! I'm afraid that here
You are a little too pious, a little too tame,
And the more is the shame.
'Tis the greatest folly
Not to be jolly;
That's what I think!
Come, drink, drink,
Drink, and die game!

Monks. And your Abbot What's-his-name?

Lucifer. Abelard.

Monks. Did he drink hard?

Lucifer. Oh, no! Not he!
He was a dry old fellow,
Without juice enough to get thoroughly mellow.
There he stood,
Lowering at us in sullen mood,
As if he had come into Brittany
Just to reform our brotherhood!
[*A roar of laughter.*]
But you see
It would never do!
For some of us knew a thing or two,
In the Abbey of St. Gildas de Rhuys!

For instance the great ado
With old Fulbert's niece,
The young and lovely Heloise!
Friar John. Stop there, if you please,
Till we drink to the fair Heloise.
All (*drinking and shouting*). Heloise! Heloise!

[*The Chapel-bell tolls.*]

Lucifer (*starting*). What is that bell for? Are you such asses
As to keep up the fashion of midnight masses?
Friar Cuthbert. It is only a poor, unfortunate brother,
Who is gifted with most miraculous powers
Of getting up at all sorts of hours,
And, by way of penance and Christian meekness,
Of creeping silently out of his cell,
To take a pull at that hideous bell;
So that all the monks who are lying awake
May murmur some kind of prayer for his sake,
And adapted to his peculiar weakness!
Friar John. From frailty and fall——
All. Good Lord, deliver us all!
Friar Cuthbert. And before the bell for matins sounds,
He takes lantern, and goes the rounds,
Flashing it into our sleepy eyes,
Merely to say it is time to arise.
But enough of that. Go on, if you please,
With your story about St. Gildas de Rhuys.
Lucifer. Well, it finally came to pass
That, half in fun and half in malice,
One Sunday at Mass
We put some poison into the chalice.
But, either by accident or design,
Peter Abelard kept away
From the chapel that day,
And a poor young friar, who in his stead
Drank the sacramental wine,
Fell on the steps of the altar, dead!

But look! do you see at the window there
That face, with a look of grief and despair,
That ghastly face, as of one in pain?

Monks. Who? where?

Lucifer. As I spoke, it vanished away again.

Friar Cuthbert. It is that nefarious
Siebald the Refectorarius.
That fellow is always playing the scout,
Creeping and peeping and prowling about;
And then he regales
The abbot with scandalous tales.

Lucifer. A spy in the convent? One of the brothers
Telling scandalous tales of the others?
Out upon him, the lazy loon!
I would put a stop to that pretty soon,
In a way he should rue it.

Monks. How shall we do it?

Lucifer. Do you, Brother Paul,
Creep under the window close to the wall,
And open it suddenly when I call.
Then seize the villain by the hair,
And hold him there,
And punish him soundly, once for all.

Friar Cuthbert. As St. Dunstan of old,
We are told,
Once caught the Devil by the nose!

Lucifer. Ha! ha! that story is very clever,
But has no foundation whatsoever.
Quick! for I see his face again
Glaring in at the window-pane;
Now! now! and do not spare your blows.

[Friar Paul *opens the window suddenly, and seizes* Siebald. *They beat him.*]

Friar Siebald. Help! help! are you going to slay me?

Friar Paul. That will teach you again to betray me!

Friar Siebald. Mercy! mercy!

Friar Paul (*shouting and beating*).

Rumpas bellorum lorum,
Vin confer amorum
Morum verorum rorum
Tu plena polorum !

Lucifer. Who stands in the doorway yonder,
Stretching out his trembling hand,
Just as Abelard used to stand,
The flash of his keen, black eyes
Forerunning the thunder?

The Monks (*in confusion*). The Abbot! the Abbot!

Friar Cuthbert. And what is the wonder!
He seems to have taken you by surprise.

Friar Francis. Hide the great flagon
From the eyes of the dragon !

Friar Cuthbert. Pull the brown hood over your face !
This will bring us into disgrace !

Abbot. What means this revel and carouse?
Is this a tavern and drinking house?
Are you Christian monks, or heathen devils,
To pollute this convent with your revels?
Were Peter Damian still upon earth,
To be shocked by such ungodly mirth,
He would write your names, with pen of gall,
In his Book of Gomorrah, one and all !
Away, you drunkards ! to your cells,
And pray till you hear the matin-bells ;
You, Brother Francis, and you, Brother Paul !
And as a penance mark each prayer
With the scourge upon your shoulders bare ;
Nothing atones for such a sin
But the blood that follows the discipline.
And you, Brother Cuthbert, come with me
Alone into the sacristy ;
You, who should be a guide to your brothers,
And are ten times worse than all the others,
For you I've a draught that has long been brewing,
You shall do a penance worth the doing !

Away to your prayers, then, one and all!
I wonder the very convent wall
Does not crumble and crush you in its fall!

The neighbouring Nunnery. The Abbess Irmingard *sitting with* Elsie *in the moonlight.*

Irmingard. The night is silent, the wind is still,
The moon is looking from yonder hill
Down upon convent, and grove, and garden;
The clouds have passed away from her face,
Leaving behind them no sorrowful trace,
Only the tender and quiet grace
Of one whose heart has been healed with pardon:
And such am I. My soul within
Was dark with passion and soiled with sin.
But now its wounds are healed again;
Gone are the anguish, the terror, and pain;
For across the desolate land of woe,
O'er whose burning sands I was forced to go,
A wind from heaven began to blow;
And all my being trembled and shook,
As the leaves of the tree, or the grass of the field,
And I was healed, as the sick are healed,
When fanned by the leaves of the Holy Book!
As thou sittest in the moonlight there,
Its glory flooding thy golden hair,
And the only darkness that which lies
In the haunted chambers of thine eyes,
I feel my soul drawn unto thee,
Strangely, and strongly, and more and more,
As to one I have known and loved before;
For every soul is akin to me
That dwells in the land of mystery!
I am the Lady Irmingard,
Born of a noble race and name!
Many a wandering Suabian bard,
Whose life was dreary, and bleak, and hard,
Has found through me the way to fame.
Brief and bright were those days, and the night
Which followed was full of a lurid light.

Love, that of every woman's heart
Will have the whole, and not a part,
That is to her, in Nature's plan,
More than ambition is to man,
Her light, her life, her very breath,
With no alternative but death,
Found me a maiden soft and young,
Just from the convent's cloistered school,
And seated on my lowly stool,
Attentive while the minstrels sung,
Gallant, graceful, gentle, tall,
Fairest, noblest, best of all,
Was Walter of the Vogelweid;
And, whatsoever may betide,
Still I think of him with pride!
His song was of the summer-time,
The very birds sang in his rhyme;
The sunshine, the delicious air,
The fragrance of the flowers were there;
And I grew restless as I heard,
Restless and buoyant as a bird,
Down soft, aërial currents sailing,
O'er blossomed orchards, and fields in bloom,
And through the momentary gloom
Of shadows o'er the landscape trailing,
Yielding and borne I knew not where,
But feeling resistance unavailing.

And thus, unnoticed and apart,
And more by accident than choice,
I listened to that single voice
Until the chambers of my heart
Were filled with it by night and day.
One night,—it was a night in May,—
Within the garden, unawares,
Under the blossoms in the gloom,
I heard it utter my own name
With protestations and wild prayers;
And it rang through me and became
Like the archangel's trump of doom,

Which the soul hears, and must obey;
And mine arose as from a tomb.
My former life now seemed to me
Such as hereafter death may be,
When in the great Eternity
We shall awake and find it day.

It was a dream and would not stay;
A dream, that in a single night
Faded and vanished out of sight.
My father's anger followed fast
This passion, as a freshening blast
Seeks out and fans the fire, whose rage
It may increase, but not assuage.
And he exclaimed: "No wandering bard
Shall win thy hand, O Irmingard!
For which Prince Henry of Hoheneck
By message and letter sues."

Gently, but firmly, I replied:
"Henry of Hoheneck I discard!
Never the hand of Irmingard
Shall lie in his as the hand of a bride!"
This said I, Walter, for thy sake;
This said I, for I could not choose.
After a pause my father spake
In that cold and deliberate tone
Which turns the hearer into stone,
And seems itself the act to be
That follows with such dread certainty:
"This, or the cloister and the veil!"
No other words than these he said.
But they were like a funeral wail;
My life was ended, my heart was dead.

That night from the castle-gate went down,
With silent, slow, and stealthy pace,
Two shadows, mounted on shadowy steeds,
Taking the narrow path that leads
Into the forest dense and brown.

In the leafy darkness of the place,
One could not distinguish form nor face,
Only a bulk without a shape,
A darker shadow in the shade;
One scarce could say it moved or stayed.
Thus it was we made our escape!
A foaming brook, with many a bound,
Followed us like a playful hound;
Then leaped before us, and in the hollow,
Paused, and waited for us to follow,
And seemed impatient, and afraid,
That our tardy flight should be betrayed
By the sound our horses' hoof-beats made.

And when we reached the plain below,
We paused a moment and drew rein
To look back at the castle again;
And we saw the windows all aglow
With lights, that were passing to and fro;
Our hearts with terror ceased to beat;
The brook crept silent to our feet;
We knew what most we feared to know.
Then suddenly horns began to blow;
And we heard a shout, and a heavy tramp,
And our horses snorted in the damp
Night air of the meadows green and wide,
And in a moment, side by side,
So close, they must have seemed but one,
The shadows across the moonlight run,
And another came, and swept behind,
Like the shadow of clouds before the wind!
How I remember that breathless flight
Across the moors, in the summer night!
How under our feet the long, white road
Backward like a river flowed,
Sweeping with it fences and hedges;
Whilst farther away, and overhead,
Paler than I, with fear and dread,
The moon fled with us, as we fled
Along the forest's jagged edges!

All this I can remember well;
But of what afterwards befell
I nothing farther can recall
Than a blind, desperate, headlong fall;
The rest is a blank and darkness all.
When I awoke out of this swoon,
The sun was shining, not the moon,
Making a cross upon the wall
With the bars of my windows narrow and tall;
And I prayed to it as I had been wont to pray,
From early childhood, day by day,
Each morning, as in bed I lay!
I was lying again in my own room!
And I thanked God, in my fever and pain,
That those shadows on the midnight plain
Were gone, and could not come again!
I struggled no longer with my doom!

This happened many years ago.
I left my father's home to come
Like Catherine to her martyrdom,
For blindly I esteemed it so.
And when I heard the convent-door
Behind me close, to ope no more,
I felt it smite me like a blow.
Through all my limbs a shudder ran,
And on my bruisèd spirit fell
The dampness of my narrow cell,
As night air on a wounded man,
Giving intolerable pain.

But now a better life began.
I felt the agony decrease
By slow degrees, then wholly cease,
Ending in perfect rest and peace!
It was not apathy, nor dulness,
That weighed and pressed upon my brain,
But the same passion I had given
To earth before, now turned to heaven
With all its overflowing fulness.

Alas! the world is full of peril!
The path that runs through the fairest meads,
On the sunniest side of the valley, leads
Into a region bleak and sterile!
Alike in the high-born and the lowly,
The will is feeble, and passion strong.
We cannot sever right from wrong;
Some falsehood mingles with all truth;
Nor is it strange the heart of youth
Should waver and comprehend but slowly
The things that are holy and unholy.
But in this sacred and calm retreat,
We are all well and safely shielded
From winds that blow, and waves that beat,
From the cold, and rain, and blighting heat,
To which the strongest hearts have yielded.
Here we stand as the Virgins Seven,
For our celestial bridegroom yearning;
Our hearts are lamps for ever burning,
With a steady and unwavering flame,
Pointing upward, for ever the same,
Steadily upward, toward the Heaven!
The moon is hidden behind a cloud;
A sudden darkness fills the room,
And thy deep eyes, amid the gloom,
Shine like jewels in a shroud.
On the leaves is a sound of falling rain;
A bird, awakened in its nest,
Gives a faint twitter of unrest,
Then smooths its plumes and sleeps again.
No other sounds than these I hear;
The hour of midnight must be near.
Thou art o'erspent with the day's fatigue
Of riding many a dusty league;
Sink, then, gently, to thy slumber;
Me so many cares encumber,
So many ghosts, and forms of fright,
Have started from their graves to-night,
They have driven sleep from mine eyes away:
I will go down to the chapel and pray.

V

A covered bridge at Lucerne.

Prince Henry. God's blessing on the architects
who build
The bridges o'er swift rivers and abysses
Before impassable to human feet,
No less than on the builders of cathedrals,
Whose massive walls are bridges thrown across
The dark and terrible abyss of Death.
Well has the name of Pontifex been given
Unto the Church's head, as the chief builder
And architect of the invisible bridge
That leads from earth to heaven.
Elsie. How dark it grows!
What are these paintings on the walls around us?
Prince Henry. The Dance Macaber!
Elsie. What?
Prince Henry. The Dance of Death.
All that go to and fro must look upon it,
Mindful of what they shall be, while beneath,
Among the wooden piles, the turbulent river
Rushes impetuous as the river of life,
With dimpling eddies, ever green and bright,
Save where the shadow of this bridge falls on it.
Elsie. Oh, yes! I see it now!
Prince Henry. The grim musician
Leads all men through the mazes of that dance,
To different sounds in different measures moving;
Sometimes he plays a lute, sometimes a drum,
To tempt or terrify.
Elsie. What is this picture?
Prince Henry. It is a young man singing to a nun,
Who kneels at her devotions, but in kneeling
Turns round to look at him; and Death, meanwhile,
Is putting out the candles on the altar!
Elsie. Ah, what a pity 'tis that she should listen
Unto such songs, when in her orisons
She might have heard in heaven the angels singing!

Prince Henry. Here he has stolen a jester's cap and bells,
And dances with the Queen.
Elsie. A foolish jest!
Prince Henry. And here the heart of the new-wedded wife,
Coming from church with her beloved lord,
He startles with the rattle of his drum.
Elsie. Ah, that is sad! And yet perhaps 'tis best
That she should die, with all the sunshine on her,
And all the benedictions of the morning,
Before this affluence of golden light
Shall fade into a cold and clouded grey,
Then into darkness!
Prince Henry. Under it is written,
"Nothing but death shall separate thee and me!"
Elsie. And what is this that follows close upon it?
Prince Henry. Death, playing on a dulcimer. Behind him,
A poor old woman, with a rosary,
Follows the sound, and seems to wish her feet
Were swifter to o'ertake him. Underneath,
The inscription reads, "Better is Death than Life."
Elsie. Better is Death than Life! Ah, yes! To thousands
Death plays upon a dulcimer, and sings
That song of consolation, till the air
Rings with it, and they cannot choose but follow
Whither he leads. And not the old alone,
But the young also hear it, and are still.
Prince Henry. Yes, in their sadder moments. 'Tis the sound
Of their own hearts they hear, half full of tears,
Which are like crystal cups, half filled with water,
Responding to the pressure of a finger
With music sweet and low and melancholy.
Let us go forward, and no longer stay
In this great picture-gallery of Death.
I hate it! ay, the very thought of it!
Elsie. Why is it hateful to you?

Prince Henry. For the reason
That life, and all that speaks of life, is lovely,
And death, and all that speaks of death, is hateful.
Elsie. The grave itself is but a covered bridge,
Leading from light to light, through a brief darkness!
Prince Henry (*emerging from the bridge*). I breathe
again more freely! Ah, how pleasant
To come once more into the light of day,
Out of that shadow of death! To hear again
The hoof-beats of our horses on firm ground,
And not upon those hollow planks, resounding
With a sepulchral echo, like the clods
On coffins in a churchyard! Yonder lies
The Lake of the Four Forest-Towns, apparelled
In light, and lingering, like a village maiden,
Hid in the bosom of her native mountains,
Then pouring all her life into another's,
Changing her name and being! Overhead,
Shaking his cloudy tresses loose in air,
Rises Pilatus, with his windy pines.
[*They pass on.*]

The Devil's Bridge. PRINCE HENRY *and* ELSIE *crossing, with attendants.*

Guide. This bridge is called the Devil's Bridge.
With a single arch, from ridge to ridge,
It leaps across the terrible chasm
Yawning beneath us, black and deep,
As if, in some convulsive spasm,
The summits of the hills had cracked,
And made a road for the cataract,
That raves and rages down the steep!
Lucifer (*under the bridge*). Ha! ha!
Guide. Never any bridge but this
Could stand across the wild abyss;
All the rest, of wood or stone,
By the Devil's hand were overthrown.
He toppled crags from the precipice,
And whatsoe'er was built by day

In the night was swept away;
None could stand but this alone.

Lucifer (*under the bridge*). Ha! ha!

Guide. I showed you in the valley a boulder
Marked with the imprint of his shoulder;
As he was bearing it up this way,
A peasant, passing, cried, "Herr Jé!"
And the Devil dropped it in his fright,
And vanished suddenly out of sight!

Lucifer (*under the bridge*). Ha! ha!

Guide. Abbot Giraldus of Einsiedel,
For pilgrims on their way to Rome,
Built this at last, with a single arch,
Under which, on its endless march,
Runs the river, white with foam,
Like a thread through the eye of a needle.
And the Devil promised to let it stand,
Under compact and condition
That the first living thing which crossed
Should be surrendered into his hand,
And be beyond redemption lost.

Lucifer (*under the bridge*). Ha! ha! perdition!

Guide. At length, the bridge being all completed,
The Abbot, standing at its head,
Threw across it a loaf of bread,
Which a hungry dog sprang after,
And the rocks re-echoed with peals of laughter
To see the Devil thus defeated!

[*They pass on.*]

Lucifer (*under the bridge*). Ha! ha! defeated!
For journeys and for crimes like this
I let the bridge stand o'er the abyss!

The St. Gothard Pass.

Prince Henry. This is the highest point. Two ways the rivers
Leap down to different seas, and as they roll
Grow deep and still, and their majestic presence
Becomes a benefaction to the towns

They visit, wandering silently among them,
Like patriarchs old among their shining tents.
Elsie. How bleak and bare it is! Nothing but mosses
Grow on these rocks.
Prince Henry. Yet are they not forgotten;
Beneficent Nature sends the mists to feed them.
Elsie. See yonder little cloud, that, borne aloft
So tenderly by the wind, floats fast away
Over the snowy peaks! It seems to me
The body of St. Catherine, borne by angels!
Prince Henry. Thou art St. Catherine, and invisible angels
Bear thee across these chasms and precipices,
Lest thou shouldst dash thy feet against a stone!
Elsie. Would I were borne unto my grave, as she was,
Upon angelic shoulders! Even now
I seem uplifted by them, light as air!
What sound is that?
Prince Henry. The tumbling avalanches!
Elsie. How awful, yet how beautiful!
Prince Henry. These are
The voices of the mountains! Thus they ope
Their snowy lips, and speak unto each other,
In the primeval language, lost to man.
Elsie. What land is this that spreads itself beneath us?
Prince Henry. Italy! Italy!
Elsie. Land of the Madonna!
How beautiful it is! It seems a garden
Of Paradise!
Prince Henry. Nay, of Gethsemane
To thee and me, of passion and of prayer!
Yet once of Paradise. Long years ago
I wandered as a youth among its bowers,
And never from my heart has faded quite
Its memory, that, like a summer sunset,
Encircles with a ring of purple light
All the horizon of my youth!

Guide. O friends!
The days are short, the way before us long;
We must not linger, if we think to reach
The inn at Belinzona before vespers!
[*They pass on.*]

At the foot of the Alps. A halt under the trees at noon.

Prince Henry. Here let us pause a moment in the trembling
Shadow and sunshine of the road-side trees,
And, our tired horses in a group assembling,
Inhale long draughts of this delicious breeze.
Our fleeter steeds have distanced our attendants;
They lag behind us with a slower pace;
We will await them under the green pendants
Of the great willows in this shady place.
Ho, Barbarossa! how thy mottled haunches
Sweat with this canter over hill and glade!
Stand still, and let these overhanging branches
Fan thy hot sides and comfort thee with shade!

Elsie. What a delightful landscape spreads before us,
Marked with a whitewashed cottage here and there!
And, in luxuriant garlands drooping o'er us,
Blossoms of grape-vines scent the sunny air.

Prince Henry. Hark! what sweet sounds are those, whose accents holy
Fill the warm noon with music sad and sweet?

Elsie. It is a band of pilgrims moving slowly
On their long journey, with uncovered feet.

Pilgrims (*chanting the Hymn of St. Hildebert*).

Me receptet Sion illa,
Sion David, urbs tranquilla,
Cujus faber auctor lucis,
Cujus portæ lignum crucis,
Cujus claves lingua Petri,
Cujus cives semper læti,
Cujus muri lapis vivus,
Cujus custos Rex festivus!

Lucifer (*as a Friar in the procession*). Here am I, too, in the pious band,
In the garb of a barefooted Carmelite dressed!
The soles of my feet are as hard and tanned
As the conscience of old Pope Hildebrand,
The Holy Satan, who made the wives
Of the bishops lead such shameful lives.
All day long I beat my breast,
And chant with a most particular zest
The Latin hymns, which I understand
Quite as well, I think, as the rest.
And at night such lodging in barns and sheds,
Such a hurly-burly in country inns,
Such a clatter of tongues in empty heads,
Such a helter-skelter of prayers and sins!
Of all the contrivances of the time
For sowing broadcast the seeds of crime,
There is none so pleasing to me and mine
As a pilgrimage to some far-off shrine!

Prince Henry. If from the outward man we judge the inner,
And cleanliness is godliness, I fear
A hopeless reprobate, a hardened sinner,
Must be that Carmelite now passing near.

Lucifer. There is my German Prince again,
Thus far on his journey to Salern,
And the love-sick girl, whose heated brain
Is sowing the cloud to reap the rain;
But it's a long road that has no turn!
Let them quietly hold their way,
I have also a part in the play.
But first I must act to my heart's content
This mummery and this merriment,
And drive this motley flock of sheep
Into the fold, where drink and sleep
The jolly old friars of Benevent.
Of a truth, it often provokes me to laugh
To see these beggars hobble along,
Lamed and maimed, and fed upon chaff,
Chanting their wonderful piff and paff,

And, to make up for not understanding the song,
Singing it fiercely, and wild, and strong!
Were it not for my magic garters and staff,
And the goblets of goodly wine I quaff,
And the mischief I make in the idle throng,
I should not continue the business long.

Pilgrims (*chanting*).

In hâc urbe, lux solennis,
Ver æternum, pax perennis;
In hâc odor implens cælos,
In hâc semper festum melos!

Prince Henry. Do you observe that monk among the train,
Who pours from his great throat the roaring bass,
As a cathedral spout pours out the rain,
And this way turns his rubicund, round face?

Elsie. It is the same who, on the Strasburg square,
Preached to the people in the open air.

Prince Henry. And he has crossed o'er mountain, field, and fell
On that good steed, that seems to bear him well,
The hackney of the Friars of Orders Grey,
His own stout legs! He, too, was in the play,
Both as King Herod and Ben Israel.
Good morrow, Friar!

Friar Cuthbert. Good morrow, noble Sir!

Prince Henry. I speak in German, for, unless I err,
You are a German.

Friar Cuthbert. I cannot gainsay you.
But by what instinct, or what secret sign,
Meeting me here, do you straightway divine
That northward of the Alps my country lies?

Prince Henry. Your accent, like St. Peter's, would betray you,
Did not your yellow beard and your blue eyes.
Moreover, we have seen your face before,
And heard you preach at the Cathedral door

On Easter Sunday, in the Strasburg square.
We were among the crowd that gathered there,
And saw you play the Rabbi with great skill,
As if, by leaning o'er so many years
To walk with little children, your own will
Had caught a childish attitude from theirs,
A kind of stooping in its form and gait,
And could no longer stand erect and straight.
Whence come you now?

Friar Cuthbert. From the old monastery
Of Hirschau, in the forest; being sent
Upon a pilgrimage to Benevent,
To see the image of the Virgin Mary,
That moves its holy eyes, and sometimes speaks,
And lets the piteous tears run down its cheeks,
To touch the hearts of the impenitent.

Prince Henry. O, had I faith, as in the days gone by,
That knew no doubt, and feared no mystery!

Lucifer (*at a distance*). Ho, Cuthbert! Friar Cuthbert!

Friar Cuthbert. Farewell, Prince!
I cannot stay to argue and convince.

Prince Henry. This is indeed the blessed Mary's land,
Virgin and Mother of our dear Redeemer!
All hearts are touched and softened at her name;
Alike the bandit, with the bloody hand,
The priest, the prince, the scholar, and the peasant,
The man of deeds, the visionary dreamer,
Pay homage to her as one ever present!
And even as children, who have much offended
A too indulgent father, in great shame,
Penitent, and yet not daring unattended
To go into his presence, at the gate
Speak with their sister, and confiding wait
Till she goes in before and intercedes;
So men, repenting of their evil deeds,
And yet not venturing rashly to draw near
With their requests an angry Father's ear,
Offer to her their prayers and their confession,

And she for them in heaven makes intercession.
And if our Faith had given us nothing more
Than this example of all womanhood,
So mild, so merciful, so strong, so good,
So patient, peaceful, loyal, loving, pure,
This were enough to prove it higher and truer
Than all the creeds the world had known before.

Pilgrims (chanting afar off).

Urbs cœlestis, urbs beata,
Supra petram collocata,
Urbs in portu satis tuto
De longinquo te saluto,
Te saluto te suspiro,
Te affecto, te requiro !

The Inn at Genoa. A terrace overlooking the sea. Night.

Prince Henry. It is the sea, it is the sea,
In all its vague immensity,
Fading and darkening in the distance !
Silent, majestical, and slow,
The white ships haunt it to and fro,
With all their ghostly sails unfurled,
As phantoms from another world
Haunt the dim confines of existence !
But ah ! how few can comprehend
Their signals, or to what good end
From land to land they come and go ?
Upon a sea more vast and dark
The spirits of the dead embark,
All voyaging to unknown coasts.
We wave our farewells from the shore,
And they depart, and come no more,
Or come as phantoms and as ghosts.
Above the darksome sea of death
Looms the great life that is to be,
A land of cloud and mystery,
A dim mirage, with shapes of men
Long dead, and passed beyond our ken.

Awe-struck, we gaze, and hold our breath
Till the fair pageant vanisheth,
Leaving us in perplexity,
And doubtful whether it has been
A vision of the world unseen,
Or a bright image of our own
Against the sky in vapours thrown.

Lucifer (*singing from the sea*). Thou didst not make it, thou canst not mend it,
But thou hast the power to end it!
The sea is silent, the sea is discreet,
Deep it lies at thy very feet;
There is no confessor like unto Death!
Thou canst not see him, but he is near;
Thou needest not whisper above thy breath,
And he will hear;
He will answer the questions,
The vague surmises and suggestions,
That fill thy soul with doubt and fear!

Prince Henry. The fisherman, who lies afloat,
With shadowy sail, in yonder boat,
Is singing softly to the Night!
But do I comprehend aright
The meaning of the words he sung
So sweetly in his native tongue?
Ah, yes! the sea is still and deep,
All things within its bosom sleep!
A single step and all is o'er;
A plunge, a bubble, and no more;
And thou, dear Elsie, wilt be free
From martyrdom and agony.

Elsie (*coming from her chamber upon the terrace*). The night is calm and cloudless,
And still as still can be,
And the stars come forth to listen
To the music of the sea.
They gather, and gather, and gather,
Until they crowd the sky,
And listen in breathless silence
To the solemn litany.

It begins in rocky caverns,
As a voice that chants alone
To the pedals of the organ
In monotonous undertone ;
And anon from shelving beaches,
And shallow sands beyond,
In snow-white robes uprising
The ghostly choirs respond.
And sadly and unceasing
The mournful voice sings on,
And the snow-white choirs still answer,
Christe eleison !

Prince Henry. Angel of God ! thy finer sense perceives
Celestial and perpetual harmonies !
Thy purer soul, that trembles and believes,
Hears the archangel's trumpet in the breeze,
And where the forest rolls, or ocean heaves,
Cecilia's organ sounding in the seas,
And tongues of prophets speaking in the leaves.
But I hear discord only and despair,
And whispers as of demons in the air !

At Sea.

Il Padrone. The wind upon our quarter lies,
And on before the freshening gale,
That fills the snow-white lateen sail,
Swiftly our light felucca flies.
Around, the billows burst and foam ;
They lift her o'er the sunken rock,
They beat her sides with many a shock,
And then upon their flowing dome
They poise her, like a weathercock !
Between us and the western skies
The hills of Corsica arise ;
Eastward, in yonder long, blue line,
The summits of the Apennine,
And southward, and still far away,
Salerno, on its sunny bay.
You cannot see it, where it lies.

Prince Henry. Ah, would that never more mine eyes
Might see its towers by night or day!
Elsie. Behind us, dark and awfully,
There comes a cloud out of the sea,
That bears the form of a hunted deer,
With hide of brown, and hoofs of black,
And antlers laid upon its back,
And fleeing fast and wild with fear,
As if the hounds were on its track!
Prince Henry. Lo! while we gaze, it breaks and falls
In shapeless masses, like the walls
Of a burnt city. Broad and red
The fires of the descending sun
Glare through the windows, and o'erhead,
Athwart the vapours, dense and dun,
Long shafts of silvery light arise,
Like rafters that support the skies!
Elsie. See! from its summit the lurid levin
Flashes downward without warning,
As Lucifer, son of the morning,
Fell from the battlements of heaven!
Il Padrone. I must entreat you, friends, below!
The angry storm begins to blow,
For the weather changes with the moon.
All this morning, until noon,
We had baffling winds, and sudden flaws
Struck the sea with their cat's-paws.
Only a little hour ago
I was whistling to Saint Antonio
For a capful of wind to fill our sail,
And instead of a breeze he has sent a gale.
Last night I saw Saint Elmo's stars,[1]
With their glimmering lanterns, all at play
On the tops of the masts and the tips of the spars,
And I knew we should have foul weather to-day.
Cheerly, my hearties! yo heave ho!
Brail up the mainsail, and let her go
As the winds will and Saint Antonio!

[1] See Appendix.

Do you see that Livornese felucca,
That vessel to the windward yonder,
Running with her gunwale under?
I was looking when the wind o'ertook her.
She had all sail set, and the only wonder
Is, that at once the strength of the blast
Did not carry away her mast.
She is a galley of the Grand Duca,
That, through the fear of the Algerines,
Convoys those lazy brigantines,
Laden with wine and oil from Lucca.
Now all is ready high and low;
Blow, blow, good Saint Antonio!

Ha! that is the first dash of the rain,
With a sprinkle of spray above the rails,
Just enough to moisten our sails,
And make them ready for the strain.
See how she leaps, as the blasts o'ertake her,
And speeds away with a bone in her mouth!
Now keep her head toward the south,
And there is no danger of bank or breaker.
With the breeze behind us, on we go;
Not too much, good Saint Antonio.

VI

The School of Salerno. A travelling Scholastic affixing his Theses to the gate of the College.

Scholastic. There, that is my gauntlet, my banner, my shield,
Hung up as a challenge to all the field!
One hundred and twenty-five propositions,
Which I will maintain with the sword of the tongue
Against all disputants, old and young.
Let us see if doctors or dialecticians
Will dare to dispute my definitions,
Or attack any one of my learned theses.
Here stand I; the end shall be as God pleases.

I think I have proved, by profound researches,
The error of all those doctrines so vicious
Of the old Areopagite Dionysius,
That are making such terrible work in the churches,
By Michael the Stammerer sent from the East,
And done into Latin by that Scottish beast,
Johannes Duns Scotus, who dares to maintain,
In the face of the truth, the error infernal,
That the universe is and must be eternal;
At first laying down, as a fact fundamental,
That nothing with God can be accidental;
Then asserting that God before the creation
Could not have existed, because it is plain
That, had he existed, he would have created;
Which is begging the question that should be debated,
And moveth me less to anger than laughter.
All nature, he holds, is a respiration
Of the Spirit of God, who, in breathing, hereafter
Will inhale it into his bosom again,
So that nothing but God alone will remain.
And therein he contradicteth himself;
For he opens the whole discussion by stating,
That God can only exist in creating.
That question I think I have laid on the shelf!

[*He goes out. Two Doctors come in disputing, and followed by Pupils.*]

Doctor Serafino. I, with the Doctor Seraphic, maintain,
That a word which is only conceived in the brain
Is a type of eternal Generation;
The spoken word is the Incarnation.
Doctor Cherubino. What do I care for the Doctor Seraphic,
With all his wordy chaffer and traffic?
Doctor Serafino. You make but a paltry show of resistance;
Universals have no real existence!

Doctor Cherubino. Your words are but idle and empty chatter;
Ideas are eternally joined to matter!

Doctor Serafino. May the Lord have mercy on your position,
You wretched, wrangling culler of herbs!

Doctor Cherubino. May he send your soul to eternal perdition,
For your Treatise on the Irregular Verbs!

[*They rush out fighting. Two Scholars come in.*]

First Scholar. Monte Cassino, then, is your College.
What think you of ours here at Salern?

Second Scholar. To tell the truth, I arrived so lately,
I hardly yet have had time to discern.
So much, at least, I am bound to acknowledge:
The air seems healthy, the buildings stately,
And on the whole I like it greatly.

First Scholar. Yes, the air is sweet; the Calabrian hills
Send us down puffs of mountain air;
And in summer-time the sea-breeze fills
With its coolness cloister, and court, and square.
Then at every season of the year
There are crowds of guests and travellers here;
Pilgrims, and mendicant friars, and traders
From the Levant, with figs and wine,
And bands of wounded and sick Crusaders,
Coming back from Palestine.

Second Scholar. And what are the studies you pursue?
What is the course you here go through?

First Scholar. The first three years of the college course
Are given to Logic alone, as the source
Of all that is noble, and wise, and true.

Second Scholar. That seems rather strange, I must confess,
In a Medical School; yet, nevertheless,

You doubtless have reasons for that.
First Scholar. O, yes!
For none but a clever dialectician
Can hope to become a great physician;
That has been settled long ago.
Logic makes an important part
Of the mystery of the healing art;
For without it how could you hope to show
That nobody knows so much as you know?
After this there are five years more
Devoted wholly to medicine,
With lectures on chirurgical lore,
And dissections of the bodies of swine,
As likest the human form divine.
Second Scholar. What are the books now most in vogue?
First Scholar. Quite an extensive catalogue;
Mostly, however, books of our own;
As Garriopontus' Passionarius,
And the writings of Matthew Platearius;
And a volume universally known
As the Regimen of the School of Salern,
For Robert of Normandy written in terse
And very elegant Latin verse.
Each of these writings has its turn.
And when at length we have finished these,
Then comes the struggle for degrees,
With all the oldest and ablest critics;
The public thesis and disputation,
Question, and answer, and explanation
Of a passage out of Hippocrates,
Or Aristotle's Analytics.
There the triumphant Magister stands!
A book is solemnly placed in his hands,
On which he swears to follow the rule
And ancient forms of the good old School;
To report if any confectionarius
Mingles his drugs with matters various,
And to visit his patients twice a day,
And once in the night, if they live in town,

And if they are poor, to take no pay.
Having faithfully promised these,
His head is crowned with a laurel crown;
A kiss on his cheek, a ring on his hand,
The Magister Artium et Physices
Goes forth from the school like a lord of the land.
And now, as we have the whole morning before us,
Let us go in, if you make no objection,
And listen awhile to a learned prelection
On Marcus Aurelius Cassiodorus.

[*They go in.* *Enter* LUCIFER *as a Doctor.*]

Lucifer. This is the great School of Salern!
A land of wrangling and of quarrels,
Of brains that seethe and hearts that burn,
Where every emulous scholar hears,
In every breath that comes to his ears,
The rustling of another's laurels!
The air of the place is called salubrious;
The neighbourhood of Vesuvius lends it
An odour volcanic, that rather mends it,
And the buildings have an aspect lugubrious,
That inspires a feeling of awe and terror
Into the heart of the beholder,
And befits such an ancient homestead of error,
Where the old falsehoods moulder and smoulder,
And yearly by many hundred hands
Are carried away, in the zeal of youth,
And sown like tares in the field of truth,
To blossom and ripen in other lands.

What have we here, affixed to the gate?
The challenge of some scholastic wight,
Who wishes to hold a public debate
On sundry questions wrong or right!
Ah, now this is my great delight!
For I have often observed of late
That such discussions end in a fight.

Let us see what the learned wag maintains
With such a prodigal waste of brains.
[*Reads.*]
"Whether angels in moving from place to place
Pass through the intermediate space.
Whether God himself is the author of evil,
Or whether that is the work of the Devil.
When, where, and wherefore Lucifer fell,
And whether he now is chained in hell."

I think I can answer that question well!
So long as the boastful human mind
Consents in such mills as this to grind,
I sit very firmly upon my throne!
Of a truth it almost makes me laugh,
To see men leaving the golden grain
To gather in piles the pitiful chaff
That old Peter Lombard thrashed with his brain,
To have it caught up and tossed again
On the horns of the Dumb Ox of Cologne!

But my guests approach! there is in the air
A fragrance like that of the Beautiful Garden
Of Paradise in the days that were!
An odour of innocence and of prayer,
And of love, and faith that never fails,
Such as the fresh young heart exhales
Before it begins to wither and harden!
I cannot breathe such an atmosphere!
My soul is filled with a nameless fear,
That, after all my trouble and pain,
After all my restless endeavour,
The youngest, fairest soul of the twain,
The most ethereal, most divine,
Will escape from my hands for ever and ever.
But the other is already mine!

Let him live to corrupt his race,
Breathing among them, with every breath,
Weakness, selfishness, and the base
And pusillanimous fear of death.

I know his nature, and I know
That of all who in my ministry
Wander the great earth to and fro,
And on my errands come and go,
The safest and subtlest are such as he.

Enter PRINCE HENRY *and* ELSIE, *with attendants.*

Prince Henry. Can you direct us to Friar Angelo?
Lucifer. He stands before you.
Prince Henry. Then you know our purpose.
I am Prince Henry of Hoheneck, and this
The maiden that I spake of in my letters.
Lucifer. It is a very grave and solemn business!
We must not be precipitate. Does she
Without compulsion, of her own free will,
Consent to this?
Prince Henry. Against all opposition,
Against all prayers, entreaties, protestations.
She will not be persuaded.
Lucifer. That is strange!
Have you thought well of it?
Elsie. I come not here
To argue, but to die. Your business is not
To question, but to kill me. I am ready.
I am impatient to be gone from here
Ere any thoughts of earth disturb again
The spirit of tranquillity within me.
Prince Henry. Would I had not come here!
Would I were dead,
And thou wert in thy cottage in the forest,
And hadst not known me! Why have I done this?
Let me go back and die.
Elsie. It cannot be;
Not if these cold flat stones on which we tread
Were coulters heated white, and yonder gateway
Flamed like a furnace with a sevenfold heat.
I must fulfil my purpose.
Prince Henry. I forbid it!
Not one step farther. For I only meant

To put thus far thy courage to the proof.
It is enough. I, too, have courage to die,
For thou hast taught me!

Elsie. O my Prince! remember
Your promises. Let me fulfil my errand.
You do not look on life and death as I do.
There are two angels, that attend unseen
Each one of us, and in great books record
Our good and evil deeds. He who writes down
The good ones, after every action closes
His volume, and ascends with it to God.
The other keeps his dreadful day-book open
Till sunset, that we may repent; which doing,
The record of the action fades away,
And leaves a line of white across the page.
Now if my act be good, as I believe,
It cannot be recalled. It is already
Sealed up in heaven, as a good deed accomplished.
The rest is yours. Why wait you? I am ready.

[*To her attendants.*]

Weep not, my friends! rather rejoice with me.
I shall not feel the pain, but shall be gone,
And you will have another friend in heaven.
Then start not at the creaking of the door
Through which I pass. I see what lies beyond it.

[*To* Prince Henry.]

And you, O Prince, bear back my benison
Unto my father's house, and all within it.
This morning in the church I prayed for them,
After confession, after absolution,
When my whole soul was white, I prayed for them.
God will take care of them, they need me not.
And in your life let my remembrance linger,
As something not to trouble and disturb it,
But to complete it, adding life to life.
And if at times beside the evening fire
You see my face among the other faces,
Let it not be regarded as a ghost
That haunts your house, but as a guest that loves you,
Nay, even as one of your own family,

Without whose presence there were something wanting.
I have no more to say. Let us go in.
Prince Henry. Friar Angelo! I charge you on your life,
Believe not what she says, for she is mad,
And comes here not to die, but to be healed!
Elsie. Alas! Prince Henry!
Lucifer. Come with me; this way.
[ELSIE *goes in with* LUCIFER, *who thrusts* PRINCE HENRY *back and closes the door.*]
Prince Henry. Gone! and the light of all my life gone with her!
A sudden darkness falls upon the world!
Oh, what a vile and abject thing am I,
That purchase length of days at such a cost!
Not by her death alone, but by the death
Of all that's good and true and noble in me!
All manhood, excellence, and self-respect,
All love, and faith, and hope, and heart are dead!
All my divine nobility of nature
By this one act is forfeited for ever.
I am a Prince in nothing but in name!
[*To the attendants.*]
Why did you let this horrible deed be done?
Why did you not lay hold on her, and keep her
From self-destruction? Angelo! murderer!
[*Struggles at the door, but cannot open it.*]
Elsie (*within*). Farewell, dear Prince! farewell!
Prince Henry. Unbar the door!
Lucifer. It is too late!
Prince Henry. It shall not be too late!
[*They burst the door open and rush in.*]

The cottage in the Odenwald. URSULA, *spinning.* *Summer afternoon. A table spread.*

Ursula. I have marked it well—it must be true,—
Death never takes one alone, but two!
Whenever he enters in at a door,
Under roof of gold or roof of thatch,

He always leaves it upon the latch,
And comes again ere the year is o'er.
Never one of a household only!
Perhaps it is a mercy of God,
Lest the dead there under the sod,
In the land of strangers, should be lonely!
Ah me! I think I am lonelier here!
It is hard to go,—but harder to stay!
Were it not for the children, I should pray
That Death would take me within the year!
And Gottlieb!—he is at work all day
In the sunny field, or the forest murk,
But I know that his thoughts are far away,
I know that his heart is not in his work!
And when he comes home to me at night
He is not cheery, but sits and sighs,
And I see the great tears in his eyes,
And try to be cheerful for his sake.
Only the children's hearts are light,
Mine is weary, and ready to break.
God help us! I hope we have done right;
We thought we were acting for the best!
[*Looking through the open door.*]
Who is it coming under the trees?
A man, in the Prince's livery dressed!
He looks about him with doubtful face,
As if uncertain of the place.
He stops at the beehives;—now he sees
The garden gate; he is going past!
Can he be afraid of the bees?
No; he is coming in at last!
He fills my heart with strange alarm!

Enter a Forester.

Forester. Is this the tenant Gottlieb's farm?
Ursula. This is his farm, and I his wife.
Pray sit. What may your business be?
Forester. News from the Prince!
Ursula. Of death or life?
Forester. You put your questions eagerly!

Ursula. Answer me, then. How is the Prince?
Forester. I left him only two hours since
Homeward returning down the river,
As strong and well as if God, the Giver,
Had given him back his youth again.
Ursula (*despairing*). Then Elsie, my poor child, is dead!
Forester. That, my good woman, I have not said.
Don't cross the bridge till you come to it,
Is a proverb old, and of excellent wit.
Ursula. Keep me no longer in this pain!
Forester. It is true your daughter is no more;—
That is, the peasant she was before.
Ursula. Alas! I am simple and lowly bred,
I am poor, distracted, and forlorn,
And it is not well that you of the court
Should mock me thus, and make a sport
Of a joyless mother whose child is dead,
For you, too, were of mother born!
Forester. Your daughter lives, and the Prince is well.
You will learn ere long how it all befell.
Her heart for a moment never failed;
But when they reached Salerno's gate,
The Prince's nobler self prevailed,
And saved her for a nobler fate.
And he was healed, in his despair,
By the touch of St. Matthew's sacred bones;
Though I think the long ride in the open air,
That pilgrimage over stocks and stones,
In the miracle must come in for a share!
Ursula. Virgin! who lovest the poor and lowly,
If the loud cry of a mother's heart
Can ever ascend to where thou art,
Into thy blessed hands and holy
Receive my prayer of praise and thanksgiving!
Let the hands that bore our Saviour bear it
Into the awful presence of God;
For thy feet with holiness are shod,
And if thou bearest it he will hear it.
Our child who was dead, again is living!

Forester. I did not tell you she was dead;
If you thought so 'twas no fault of mine;
At this very moment, while I speak,
They are sailing homeward down the Rhine,
In a splendid barge, with golden prow,
And decked with banners white and red
As the colours on your daughter's cheek.
They call her the Lady Alicia now;
For the Prince in Salerno made a vow
That Elsie only would he wed.

Ursula. Jesu Maria! what a change!
All seems to me so weird and strange!

Forester. I saw her standing on the deck,
Beneath an awning cool and shady;
Her cap of velvet could not hold
The tresses of her hair of gold,
That flowed and floated like the stream
And fell in masses down her neck.
As fair and lovely did she seem
As in a story or a dream
Some beautiful and foreign lady.
And the Prince looked so grand and proud,
And waved his hand thus to the crowd
That gazed and shouted from the shore,
All down the river, long and loud.

Ursula. We shall behold our child once more,
She is not dead! She is not dead!
God, listening, must have overheard
The prayers, that, without sound or word,
Our hearts in secrecy have said!
Oh, bring me to her; for mine eyes
Are hungry to behold her face;
My very soul within me cries;
My very hands seem to caress her,
To see her, gaze at her, and bless her;
Dear Elsie, child of God and grace!

[*Goes out towards the garden.*]

Forester. There goes the good woman out of her head!
And Gottlieb's supper is waiting here;

A very capacious flagon of beer,
And a very portentous loaf of bread.
One would say his grief did not much oppress him.
Here's to the health of the Prince, God bless him.
[*He drinks.*]
Ha ! it buzzes and stings like a hornet !
And what a scene there, through the door !
The forest behind and the garden before,
And midway an old man of threescore,
With a wife and children that caress him.
Let me try still further to cheer and adorn it
With a merry, echoing blast of my cornet !
[*Goes out blowing his horn.*]

The Castle of Vautsberg on the Rhine. PRINCE HENRY *and* ELSIE *standing on the terrace at evening. The sound of bells heard from a distance.*

Prince Henry. We are alone. The wedding guests
Ride down the hill with plumes and cloaks,
And the descending dark invests
The Niederwald, and all the nests
Among its hoar and haunted oaks.
Elsie. What bells are those, that ring so slow,
So mellow, musical, and low ?
Prince Henry. They are the bells of Geisenheim,
That with their melancholy chime
Ring out the curfew of the sun.
Elsie. Listen, beloved.
Prince Henry. They are done !
Dear Elsie ! many years ago
Those same soft bells at eventide
Rang in the ears of Charlemagne,
As, seated by Fastrada's side
At Ingelheim, in all his pride,
He heard their sound with secret pain.
Elsie. Their voices only speak to me
Of peace and deep tranquillity,
And endless confidence in thee !
Prince Henry. Thou knowest the story of her ring,

How, when the court went back to Aix,
Fastrada died; and how the king
Sat watching by her night and day,
Till into one of the blue lakes,
Which water that delicious land,
They cast the ring, drawn from her hand;
And the great monarch sat serene
And sad beside the fated shore,
Nor left the land for evermore.

Elsie. That was true love.

Prince Henry. For him the queen
Ne'er did what thou hast done for me.

Elsie. Wilt thou as fond and faithful be?
Wilt thou so love me after death?

Prince Henry. In life's delight, in death's dismay,
In storm and sunshine, night and day,
In health, in sickness, in decay,
Here and hereafter, I am thine!
Thou hast Fastrada's ring. Beneath
The calm, blue waters of thine eyes,
Deep in thy steadfast soul it lies,
And, undisturbed by this world's breath,
With magic light its jewels shine!
This golden ring, which thou hast worn
Upon thy finger since the morn,
Is but a symbol and a semblance,
An outward fashion, a remembrance,
Of what thou wearest within unseen,
O my Fastrada, O my queen!
Behold! the hill-tops all aglow
With purple and with amethyst;
While the whole valley deep below
Is filled, and seems to overflow,
With a fast-rising tide of mist.
The evening air grows damp and chill;
Let us go in.

Elsie. Ah, not so soon.
See yonder fire! It is the moon
Slow rising o'er the eastern hill.
It glimmers on the forest tips,

And through the dewy foliage drips
In little rivulets of light,
And makes the heart in love with night.

Prince Henry. Oft on this terrace, when the day
Was closing, have I stood and gazed,
And seen the landscape fade away,
And the white vapours rise and drown
Hamlet and vineyard, tower and town,
While far above the hill-tops blazed.
But then another hand than thine
Was gently held and clasped in mine;
Another head upon my breast
Was laid, as thine is now, at rest.
Why dost thou lift those tender eyes
With so much sorrow and surprise?
A minstrel's, not a maiden's hand,
Was that in which my own was pressed;
A manly form usurped thy place,
A beautiful, but bearded face,
That now is in the Holy Land,
Yet in my memory from afar
Is shining on us like a star.
But linger not. For, while I speak,
A sheeted spectre white and tall,
The cold mist climbs the castle wall,
And lays his hand upon thy cheek.

[*They go in.*]

EPILOGUE

THE TWO RECORDING ANGELS ASCENDING

The Angel of Good Deeds (*with closed book*).

God sent his messenger the rain,
And said unto the mountain brook,
"Rise up, and from thy caverns look,
And leap, with naked, snow-white feet,
From the cool hills into the heat
Of the broad, arid plain."

God sent his messenger of faith,
And whispered in the maiden's heart,
"Rise up, and look from where thou art,
And scatter with unselfish hands
Thy freshness on the barren sands
And solitudes of Death."

O beauty of holiness,
Of self-forgetfulness, of lowliness!
O power of meekness,
Whose very gentleness and weakness
Are like the yielding, but irresistible air!
Upon the pages
Of the sealed volume that I bear,
The deed divine
Is written in characters of gold,
That never shall grow old,
But through all ages
Burn and shine
With soft effulgence!
O God! it is thy indulgence
That fills the world with the bliss
Of a good deed like this!

The Angel of Evil Deeds (*with open book*).

Not yet, not yet
Is the red sun wholly set,
But evermore recedes,
While open still I bear
The Book of Evil Deeds,
To let the breathings of the upper air
Visit its pages, and erase
The records from its face!
Fainter and fainter as I gaze
In the broad blaze
The glimmering landscape shines,
And below me the black river
Is hidden by wreaths of vapour!
Fainter and fainter the black lines

Begin to quiver
Along the whitening surface of the paper;
Shade after shade
The terrible words grow faint and fade,
And in their place
Runs a white space!
Down goes the sun!
But the soul of one,
Who by repentance
Has escaped the dreadful sentence,
Shines bright below me as I look.
It is the end!
With closèd Book
To God do I ascend.

Lo! over the mountain steeps
A dark, gigantic shadow sweeps
Beneath my feet;
A blackness inwardly brightening
With sudden heat,
As a storm-cloud lurid with lightning.
And a cry of lamentation,
Repeated and again repeated,
Deep and loud
As the reverberation
Of cloud answering unto cloud,
Swells and rolls away in the distance,
As if the sheeted
Lightning retreated,
Baffled and thwarted by the wind's resistance.

It is Lucifer,
The son of mystery;
And since God suffers him to be,
He, too, is God's minister,
And labours for some good
By us not understood!

MARTIN LUTHER

A Chamber in the Wartburg. Morning. MARTIN LUTHER *writing.*

Martin Luther. OUR GOD a tower of strength is he,
A goodly wall and weapon;
From all our need he helps us free,
That now to us doth happen.
The old evil foe
Doth in earnest grow,
In grim armour dight,
Much guile and great might;
On earth there is none like him.
O yes; a tower of strength indeed,
A present help in all our need,
A sword and buckler is our God.
Innocent men have walked unshod
O'er burning ploughshares, and have trod
Unharmed on serpents in their path,
And laughed to scorn the Devil's wrath!

Safe in this Wartburg tower I stand
Where God hath led me by the hand,
And look down, with a heart at ease,
Over the pleasant neighbourhoods,
Over the vast Thuringian Woods,
With flash of river, and gloom of trees,
With castles crowning the dizzy heights,
And farms and pastoral delights,
And the morning pouring everywhere
Its golden glory on the air.
Safe, yes, safe am I here at last,
Safe from the overwhelming blast
Of the mouths of Hell, that followed me fast,
And the howling demons of despair
That hunted me like a beast to his lair.

Of our own might we nothing can;
We soon are unprotected;

There fighteth for us the right Man,
Whom God himself elected.
Who is he? ye exclaim;
Christus is his name,
Lord of Sabaoth,
Very God in troth;
The field he holds for ever.

Nothing can vex the Devil more
Than the name of him whom we adore.
Therefore doth it delight me best
To stand in the choir among the rest,
With the great organ trumpeting
Through its metallic tubes, and sing:
Et Verbum caro factum est!
These words the Devil cannot endure,
For he knoweth their meaning well!
Him they trouble and repel,
Us they comfort and allure,
And happy it were, if our delight
Were as great as his affright!
Yea, music is the Prophet's art;
Among the gifts that God hath sent,
One of the most magnificent!
It calms the agitated heart;
Temptations, evil thoughts, and all
The passions that disturb the soul,
Are quelled by its divine control,
As the Evil Spirit fled from Saul,
And his distemper was allayed,
When David took his harp and played.

This world may full of Devils be,
All ready to devour us;
Yet not so sore afraid are we,
They shall not overpower us.
This World's Prince, howe'er
Fierce he may appear,
He can harm us not,
He is doomed, God wot!
One little word can slay him!

Incredible it seems to some,
And to myself a mystery,
That such weak flesh and blood as we,
Armed with no other shield or sword,
Or other weapon than the Word,
Should combat and should overcome
A spirit powerful as he!
He summons forth the Pope of Rome
With all his diabolic crew,
His shorn and shaven retinue
Of priests and children of the dark;
Kill! kill! they cry, the Heresiarch,
Who rouseth up all Christendom
Against us; and at one fell blow
Seeks the whole Church to overthrow!
Not yet; my hour is not yet come.

Yesterday in an idle mood,
Hunting with others in the wood,
I did not pass the hours in vain,
For in the very heart of all
The joyous tumult raised around,
Shouting of men, and baying of hound,
And the bugle's blithe and cheery call,
And echoes answering back again,
From crags of the distant mountain chain,—
In the very heart of this, I found
A mystery of grief and pain.
It was an image of the power
Of Satan, hunting the world about,
With his nets and traps and well-trained dogs,
His bishops and priests and theologues,
And all the rest of the rabble rout,
Seeking whom he may devour,
Enough have I had of hunting hares,
Enough of these hours of idle mirth,
Enough of nets and traps and gins!
The only hunting of any worth
Is where I can pierce with javelins
The cunning foxes and wolves and bears,

The whole iniquitous troop of beasts,
The Roman Pope and the Roman priests
That sorely infest and afflict the earth!

Ye nuns, ye singing birds of the air!
The fowler hath caught you in his snare,
And keeps you safe in his gilded cage,
Singing the song that never tires,
To lure down others from their nests;
How ye flutter and beat your breasts,
Warm and soft with young desires,
Against the cruel pitiless wires,
Reclaiming your lost heritage!
Behold! a hand unbars the door,
Ye shall be captives held no more.

The Word they shall perforce let stand,
And little thanks they merit!
For he is with us in the land,
With gifts of his own Spirit!
Though they take our life,
Goods, honours, child, and wife,
Let these pass away,
Little gain have they;
The Kingdom still remaineth!

Yea, it remaineth for evermore,
However Satan may rage and roar,
Though often he whispers in my ears:
What if thy doctrines false should be?
And wrings from me a bitter sweat.
Then I put him to flight with jeers,
Saying: Saint Satan! pray for me;
If thou thinkest I am not saved yet!

And my mortal foes that lie in wait
In every avenue and gate!
As to that odious monk John Tetzel
Hawking about his hollow wares
Like a huckster at village fairs,
And those mischievous fellows, Wetzel,

Campanus, Carlstadt, Martin Cellarius,
And all the busy multifarious
Heretics, and disciples of Arius,
Half-learned, dunce-bold, dry and hard,
They are not worthy of my regard,
Poor and humble as I am.
But ah! Erasmus of Rotterdam,
He is the vilest miscreant
That ever walked this world below!
A Momus, making his mock and mow
At Papist and at Protestant,
Sneering at St. John and St. Paul,
At God and Man, at one and all;
And yet as hollow and false and drear,
As a cracked pitcher to the ear,
And ever growing worse and worse!
Whenever I pray, I pray for a curse
On Erasmus, the Insincere!

Philip Melanchthon! thou alone
Faithful among the faithless known,
Thee I hail, and only thee!
Behold the record of us three!
Res et verba Philippus,
Res sine verbis Lutherus;
Erasmus verba sine re!
My Philip, prayest thou for me?
Lifted above all earthly care,
From these high regions of the air,
Among the birds that day and night
Upon the branches of tall trees
Sing their lauds and litanies,
Praising God with all their might,
My Philip, unto thee I write.

My Philip! thou who knowest best
All that is passing in this breast;
The spiritual agonies,
The inward deaths, the inward hell,
And the divine new births as well,
That surely follow after these,

As after winter follows spring ;
My Philip, in the night-time sing
This song of the Lord I send to thee,
And I will sing it for thy sake,
Until our answering voices make
A glorious antiphony,
And choral chant of victory !

ST. JOHN

SAINT JOHN *wandering over the face of the Earth.*

St. John. THE Ages come and go,
The Centuries pass as Years ;
My hair is white as the snow,
My feet are weary and slow,
The earth is wet with my tears !
The kingdoms crumble, and fall
Apart, like a ruined wall,
Or a bank that is undermined
By a river's ceaseless flow,
And leave no trace behind !
The world itself is old ;
The portals of Time unfold
On hinges of iron, that grate
And groan with the rust and the weight,
Like the hinges of a gate
That hath fallen to decay ;
But the evil doth not cease ;
There is war instead of peace,
Instead of love there is hate ;
And still I must wander and wait,
Still I must watch and pray,
Not forgetting in whose sight,
A thousand years in their flight
Are as a single day.
The life of man is a gleam
Of light, that comes and goes

Like the course of the Holy Stream,
The cityless river, that flows
From fountains no one knows,
Through the Lake of Galilee,
Through forests and level lands,
Over rocks, and shallows, and sands
Of a wilderness wild and vast,
Till it findeth its rest at last
In the desolate Dead Sea!
But alas! alas for me,
Not yet this rest shall be!

What, then! doth Charity fail?
Is Faith of no avail?
Is Hope blown out like a light
By a gust of wind in the night?
The clashing of creeds, and the strife
Of the many beliefs, that in vain
Perplex man's heart and brain,
Are nought but the rustle of leaves,
When the breath of God upheaves
The boughs of the Tree of Life,
And they subside again!
And I remember still
The words, and from whom they came,
Not he that repeateth the name,
But he that doeth the will!

And him evermore I behold
Walking in Galilee,
Through the corn-fields waving gold,
In hamlet, in wood, and in wold,
By the shores of the Beautiful Sea.
He toucheth the sightless eyes;
Before him the demons flee;
To the dead he sayeth: Arise!
To the living: Follow me!
And that voice still soundeth on
From the centuries that are gone,
To the centuries that shall be!

From all vain pomps and shows,
From the pride that overflows,
And the false conceits of men ;
From all the narrow rules
And subtleties of Schools,
And the craft of tongue and pen ;
Bewildered in its search,
Bewildered with the cry :
Lo, here ! lo, there, the Church !
Poor, sad Humanity
Through all the dust and heat
Turns back with bleeding feet,
By the weary road it came,
Unto the simple thought
By the Great Master taught,
And that remaineth still :
Not he that repeateth the name
But he that doeth the will !

NOTES

Page 59. *All the Foresters of Flanders.*

THE title of Foresters was given to the early governors of Flanders, appointed by the kings of France. Lyderick du Bucq, in the days of Clotaire the Second, was the first of them; and Beaudoin Bras-de-Fer, who stole away the fair Judith, daughter of Charles the Bald, from the French court, and married her in Bruges, was the last. After him, the title of Forester was changed to that of Count. Philippe d'Alsace, Guy de Dampierre, and Louis de Crécy, coming later in the order of time, were therefore rather Counts than Foresters. Philippe went twice to the Holy Land as a Crusader, and died of the plague at St. Jean-d'Acre, shortly after the capture of the city by the Christians. Guy de Dampierre died in the prison of Compiègne. Louis de Crécy was son and successor of Robert de Béthune, who strangled his wife, Yolande de Burgogne, with the bridle of his horse, for having poisoned, at the age of eleven years, Charles, his son by his first wife, Blanche d'Anjou.

Page 59. *Stately dames, like queens attended.*

When Philippe-le-Bel, king of France, visited Flanders with his queen, she was so astonished at the magnificence of the dames of Bruges, that she exclaimed, "Je croyais être seule reine ici, mais il paraît que ceux de Flandre qui se trouvent dans nos prisons sont tous des princes, car leurs femmes sont habillées comme des princesses et des reines."

When the burgomasters of Ghent, Bruges, and Ypres went to Paris to pay homage to King John, in 1351, they were received with great pomp and distinction; but, being invited to a festival, they observed that their seats at table were not furnished with cushions; whereupon, to make known their displeasure at this want of regard to their dignity, they folded their richly-embroidered cloaks and seated themselves upon them. On rising from table, they left their cloaks behind them, and, being informed of their apparent forgetfulness, Simon van Eertrycke, burgomaster of Bruges, replied: "We Flemings are not in the habit of carrying away our cushions after dinner."

Page 59. *Knights who bore the Fleece of Gold.*

Philippe de Burgogne, surnamed Le Bon, espoused Isabella of Portugal, on the 10th of January 1430; and on the same day instituted the famous order of the Fleece of Gold.

Page 60. *I beheld the gentle Mary.*

Marie de Valois, Duchess of Burgundy, was left by the death of her father, Charles-le-Téméraire, at the age of twenty, the richest heiress of Europe. She came to Bruges, as Countess of Flanders, in 1477, and in the same year was married by proxy to the Archduke Maximilian. According to the custom of the time, the Duke of Bavaria, Maximilian's substitute, slept with the princess. They were both in complete dress, separated by a naked sword, and attended by four armed guards. Marie was adored by her subjects for her gentleness and her many other virtues.

Maximilian was the son of the Emperor Frederick the Third, and is the same person mentioned afterwards in the poem of *Nuremberg* as the Kaiser Maximilian, and the hero of Pfinzing's poem of *Teuerdank*. Having been imprisoned by the revolted burghers of Bruges, they refused to release him, till he consented to kneel in the public square, and to swear on the Holy Evangelists and the body of Saint Donatus, that he would not take vengeance upon them for their rebellion.

Page 60. *The bloody battle of the Spurs of Gold.*

This battle, the most memorable in Flemish history, was fought under the walls of Courtray, on the 11th of July 1302, between the French and the Flemings, the former commanded by Robert, Comte d'Artois, and the latter by Guillaume de Juliers, and Jean, Comte de Namur. The French army was completely routed, with a loss of twenty thousand infantry and seven thousand cavalry, among whom were sixty-three princes, dukes, and counts, seven hundred lords-banneret, and eleven hundred noblemen. The flower of the French nobility perished on that day; to which history has given the name of the *Journée des Éperons d'Or*, from the great number of golden spurs found on the field of battle. Seven hundred of them were hung up as a trophy in the church of Nôtre Dame de Courtray; and as the cavaliers of that day wore but a single spur each, these vouched to God for the violent and bloody death of seven hundred of his creatures.

Page 60. *Saw the fight at Minnewater.*

When the inhabitants of Bruges were digging a canal at Minnewater to bring the waters of the Lys from Deynze to their city, they were attacked and routed by the citizens of Ghent, whose commerce would have been much injured by the canal. They were led by Jean Lyons, captain of a military company at Ghent, called the *Chaperons Blancs*. He had great sway over the turbulent populace, who, in those prosperous times of the city, gained an easy livelihood by labouring two or three days in the week, and had the remaining four or five to devote to public affairs. The fight at Minnewater was followed by open rebellion against Louis de Maele, the Count of Flanders and Protector of Bruges. His superb château of Wondelghem was pillaged and burnt, and the insurgents forced the gates of Bruges, and entered in triumph, with Lyons mounted at their head. A few days afterwards he died suddenly, perhaps by poison.

Meanwhile the insurgents received a check at the village of Nevèle; and two hundred of them perished in the church, which was burnt by the Count's orders. One of the chiefs, Jean de Lannoy, took refuge in the belfry. From the summit of the tower he held forth his purse filled with gold, and begged for deliverance. It was in vain. His enemies cried to him from below to save himself as best he might; and, half suffocated with smoke and flame, he threw himself from the tower, and perished at their feet. Peace was soon afterwards established, and the Count retired to faithful Bruges.

Page 68. *In the church of sainted Lawrence stands a pix of sculpture rare.*

This pix, or tabernacle for the vessels of the sacrament, is by the hand of Adam Kraft. It is an exquisite piece of sculpture, in white stone, and rises to the height of sixty-four feet. It stands in the choir, whose richly-painted windows cover it with varied colours.

Page 106. *As Lope says.*

"La cólera
de un Español sentado no se templa,
si no le representan en dos horas
hasta el final juicio desde el Génesis."
Lope de Vega.

Page 108. *Abernuncio Satanas.*

"Digo, Senora, respondió Sancho, lo que tengo dicho, que de los azotes abernuncio. Abrenuncio habeis de decir,

Sancho, y no como decis, dijo el Duque."—*Don Quixote*, Part ii. c. xxxv.

Page 118. *Fray Carillo.*

The allusion here is to a Spanish epigram.

"Siempre, Fray Carrillo, estás
cansándonos acá fuera;
quién en tu celda estuviera
para no verte jamás!"
Böhl de Faber. Floresta, No. 611.

Page 118. *Padre Francisco.*

This is from an Italian popular song.

"'Padre Francesco,
Padre Francesco!'
—Cosa volete del Padre Francesco—
'V'è una bella ragazzina
Che si vuole confessar!'
Fatte l'entrare, fatte l'entrare!
Che la voglio confessare!"
Kopisch. Volksthümliche Poesien aus allen Mundarten Italiens und seiner Inseln, p. 194.

Page 119. *Ave! cujus calcem clare.*

From a monkish hymn of the twelfth century, in Sir Alexander Croke's *Essay on the Origin, Progress, and Decline of Rhyming Latin Verse*, p. 109.

Page 130. *Asks if his money-bags would rise.*

"Y volviéndome á un lado, ví á un Avariento, que estaba preguntando á otro (que por haber sido embalsamado, y estar léxos sus tripas, no hablaba porque no habian llegado si habian de resucitar aquel dia todos los enterrados), si resucitarian unos bolsones suyos?"—*El Sueño de las Calaveras.*

Page 131. *The river of his thoughts.*

This expression is from Dante:—

"Si che chiaro
Per essa scenda della mente il fiume."

Page 132. *Mari Franca.*

"Porque casó Mari Franca
cuatro leguas de Salamanca."

Page 133. *Ay, soft, emerald eyes.*

The Spaniards, with good reason, consider this colour of the eye as beautiful, and celebrate it in song; as, for example, in the well-known *Villancico*:—

"Ay ojuelos verdes,
ay los mis ojuelos,
ay hagan los cielos
que de mí te acuerdes!
. . . . . .
Tengo confianza
de mis verdes ojos."
Böhl de Faber. Floresta, No. 255.

Dante speaks of Beatrice's eyes as emeralds. *Purgatorio*, xxxi. 116. Lami says, in his *Annotazioni*, "Erano i suoi occhi d' un turchino verdiccio, simie a quel del mare."

Page 134. *The Avenging Child.*

See the ancient ballads of *El Infante Vengador*, and *Calaynos.*

Page 134. *All are sleeping.*

From the Spanish. *Böhl's Floresta*, No. 282.

Page 146. *Good Night!*

From the Spanish; as are likewise the songs immediately following, and that which commences the first scene of Act III.

Page 148. *The evil eye.*

"In the Gitano language, casting the evil eye is called *Querelar Nasula*, which simply means making sick, and which, according to the common superstition, is accomplished by casting an evil look at people, especially children, who, from the tenderness of their constitution, are supposed to be more easily blighted than those of a more mature age. After receiving the evil glance, they fall sick, and die in a few hours.

"The Spaniards have very little to say respecting the evil eye, though the belief in it is very prevalent, especially in Andalusia, amongst the lower orders. A stag's horn is considered a good safeguard, and on that account a small horn, tipped with silver, is frequently attached to the children's necks by means of a cord braided from the hair of a black mare's tail. Should the evil glance be cast, it is imagined that the horn receives it, and instantly snaps asunder. Such horns may be purchased in some of the silversmiths' shops at Seville."—BORROW's *Zincali*, vol. i. c. ix.

Page 160. *On the top of a mountain I stand.*

This and the following scraps of song are from Borrow's *Zincali; or, An Account of the Gipsies in Spain.*

Page 169. *If thou art sleeping, maiden.*

From the Spanish; as is likewise the song of the Contrabandista below.

Page 284. *For these bells have been anointed*
And baptized with holy water!

The Consecration and Baptism of Bells is one of the most curious ceremonies of the Church in the Middle Ages. The Council of Cologne ordained as follows:—

"Let the bells be blessed, as the trumpets of the Church militant, by which the people are assembled to hear the word of God; the clergy to announce his mercy by day, and his truth in their nocturnal vigils: that by their sound the faithful may be invited to prayers, and that the spirit of devotion in them may be increased. The fathers have also maintained that demons affrighted by the sound of bells calling Christians to prayers, would flee away; and when they fled, the persons of the faithful would be secure: that the destruction of lightnings and whirlwinds would be averted, and the spirits of the storm defeated."—*Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, Art. "Bells." See also Scheible's *Kloster*, vi. 776.

Page 310. *It is the malediction of Eve!*

"Nec esses plus quam femina, quæ nunc etiam viros transcendis, et quæ maledictionem Evæ in benedictionem vertisti Mariæ."—*Epistola Abælardi Heloissæ.*

Page 330. *To come back to my text.*

In giving this sermon of Friar Cuthbert, as a specimen of the *Risus Paschales*, or street preaching of the monks at Easter, I have exaggerated nothing. This very anecdote, offensive as it is, comes from a discourse of Father Barletta, a Dominican friar of the fifteenth century, whose fame as a popular preacher was so great, that it gave rise to the proverb—

Nescit predicare
Qui nescit Barlettare.

"Among the abuses introduced in this century," says Tiraboschi, "was that of exciting from the pulpit the laughter of the hearers; as if that were the same thing as converting them. We have examples of this not only in

Italy, but also in France, where the sermons of Menot and Maillard, and of others, who would make a better appearance on the stage than in the pulpit, are still celebrated for such follies."

If the reader is curious to see how far the freedom of speech was carried in these popular sermons, he is referred to Scheible's *Kloster*, vol. i., where he will find extracts from Abraham à Sancta Clara, Sebastian, Frank, and others; and, in particular, an anonymous discourse called *Der Gräuel der Verwüstung*—The Abomination of Desolation—preached at Ottakring, a village west of Vienna, November 25, 1782, in which the licence of language is carried to its utmost limit.

See also *Prédicatoriana, ou Révélations singulières et amusantes sur les Prédicateurs; par G. P. Philomneste.* (Menin.) This work contains extracts from the popular sermons of St. Vincent Ferrier, Barletta, Menot, Maillard, Marini, Raulin, Valladier, De Besse, Camus, Père André, Bening, and the most eloquent of all, Jacques Brydaine.

My authority for the spiritual interpretation of bell-ringing, which follows, is Durandus, *Ration. Divin Offic.*, Lib. i. cap. 4.

Page 334. THE NATIVITY: A Miracle-Play.

The earliest mystery or religious play which has been preserved is the *Christos Paschon* of Gregory Nazianzen, written in Greek in the fourth century. Next to this come the remarkable Latin plays of Roswitha, the nun of Gandersheim, in the tenth century, which, though crude, and wanting in artistic construction, are marked by a good deal of dramatic power and interest. A handsome edition of these plays, with a French translation, has been lately published, entitled, *Théatre de Rotsvitha, Religieuse Allemande du X^e Siècle. Par Charles Magnin.* Paris, 1845.

The most important collections of English Mysteries and Miracle-Plays are those known as the Townley, the Chester, and the Coventry plays. The first of these collections has been published by the Surtees Society, and the other two by the Shakespeare Society. In his introduction to the Coventry Mysteries, the editor, Mr. Halliwell, quotes the following passage from Dugdale's *Antiquities of Warwickshire:*

"Before the suppression of the monasteries, this city was very famous for the pageants that were played therein, upon Corpus Christi day; which, occasioning very great confluence of people thither, from far and near, was of no small benefit thereto; which pageants being acted with mighty state and reverence by the friars of this house, had theatres

for the several scenes, very large and high, placed upon wheels, and drawn to all the eminent parts of the city, for the better advantage of the spectators; and contained the story of the New Testament, composed into old English Rithme, as appeareth by an ancient MS., intituled *Ludus Corporis Christi*, or *Ludus Conventriæ*. I have been told by some old people, who in their younger years were eye-witnesses of these pageants so acted, that the yearly confluence of people to see that show was extraordinary great, and yielded no small advantage to this city."

The representation of religious plays has not yet been wholly discontinued by the Roman Church. At Ober-Ammergau in the Tyrol, a grand spectacle of this kind is exhibited once in ten years. A very graphic description of that which took place in the year 1850 is given by Miss Anna Mary Howitt, in her *Art-Student in Munich*, vol. i. chap. iv. She says:—

"We had come expecting to feel our souls revolt at so material a representation of Christ, as any representation of him we naturally imagined must be in a peasant's Miracle-Play. Yet so far, strange to confess, neither horror, disgust, nor contempt was excited in our minds. Such an earnest solemnity and simplicity breathed throughout the whole of the performance, that to me, at least, anything like anger, or a perception of the ludicrous, would have seemed more irreverent on my part than was this simple, childlike rendering of the sublime Christian tragedy. We felt at times as though the figures of Cimabue's, Giotto's, and Perugino's pictures had become animated, and were moving before us; there was the same simple arrangement and brilliant colour of drapery; the same earnest, quiet dignity about the heads, whilst the entire absence of all theatrical effect wonderfully increased the illusion. There were scenes and groups so extraordinarily like the early Italian pictures, that you could have declared they were the works of Giotto and Perugino, and not living men and women, had not the figures moved and spoken, and the breeze stirred their richly-coloured drapery, and the sun cast long, moving shadows behind them on the stage. These effects of sunshine and shadow, and of drapery fluttered by the wind, were very striking and beautiful; one could imagine how the Greeks must have availed themselves of such striking effects in their theatres open to the sky."

Mr. Bayard Taylor, in his *Eldorado*, gives a description of a Mystery he saw performed at San Lionel, in Mexico. See vol. ii. chap. xi.

"Against the wing-wall of the Hacienda del Mayo, which occupied one end of the plaza, was raised a platform, on

which stood a table covered with scarlet cloth. A rude bower of cane-leaves, on one end of the platform, represented the manger of Bethlehem ; while a cord, stretched from its top across the plaza to a hole in the front of the church, bore a large tinsel star suspended by a hole in its centre. There was quite a crowd in the plaza, and very soon a procession appeared, coming up from the lower part of the village. The three kings took the lead ; the Virgin, mounted on an ass that gloried in a gilded saddle and rose-besprinkled mane and tail, followed them, led by the angel ; and several women, with curious masks of paper, brought up the rear. Two characters of the harlequin sort—one with a dog's head on his shoulders, and the other a bald-headed friar, with a huge hat hanging on his back—played all sorts of antics for the diversion of the crowd. After making the circuit of the plaza, the Virgin was taken to the platform, and entered the manger. King Herod took his seat at the scarlet table, with an attendant in blue coat and red sash, whom I took to be his Prime Minister. The three kings remained on their horses in front of the church ; but between them and the platform, under the string on which the star was to slide, walked two men in long white robes and blue hoods, with parchment folios in their hands. These were the Wise Men of the East, as one might readily know from their solemn air, and the mysterious glances which they cast towards all quarters of the heavens.

"In a little while, a company of women on the platform, concealed behind a curtain, sang an angelic chorus to the tune of 'O pescator dell' onda.' At the proper moment, the Magi turned towards the platform, followed by the star, to which a string was conveniently attached, that it might be slid along the line. The three kings followed the star till it reached the manger, when they dismounted, and inquired for the sovereign whom it had led them to visit. They were invited upon the platform and introduced to Herod, as the only king ; this did not seem to satisfy them, and, after some conversation, they retired. By this time the star had receded to the other end of the line, and commenced moving forward again, they following. The angel called them into the manger, where, upon their knees, they were shown a small wooden box, supposed to contain the sacred infant ; they then retired, and the star brought them back no more. After this departure, King Herod declared himself greatly confused by what he had witnessed, and was very much afraid this newly-found king would weaken his power. Upon consultation with his Prime Minister, the Massacre of the Innocents was decided upon as the only means of security.

"The angel, on hearing this, gave warning to the Virgin, who quickly got down from the platform, mounted her bespangled donkey, and hurried off. Herod's Prime Minister directed all the children to be handed up for execution. A boy, in a ragged sarape, was caught and thrust forward; the Minister took him by the heels in spite of his kicking, and held his head on the table. The little brother and sister of the boy, thinking he was really to be decapitated, yelled at the top of their voices in an agony of terror, which threw the crowd into a roar of laughter. King Herod brought down his sword with a whack on the table, and the Prime Minister, dipping his brush into a pot of white paint which stood before him, made a flaring cross on the boy's face. Several other boys were caught and served likewise; and finally, the two harlequins, whose kicks and struggles nearly shook down the platform. The procession then went off up the hill, followed by the whole population of the village. All the evening there were fandangos in the méson, bonfires and rockets on the plaza, ringing of bells, and high mass in the church, with the accompaniment of two guitars, tinkling to lively polkas."

In 1852 there was a representation of this kind by Germans in Boston; and I have now before me the copy of a play-bill, announcing the performance on June 10, 1852, in Cincinnati, of the "Great Biblico-Historical Drama, the Life of Jesus Christ," with the characters and the names of the performers.

Page 351. The Scriptorium.

A most interesting volume might be written on the Calligraphers and Chrysographers, the transcribers and illuminators of manuscripts in the Middle Ages. These men were for the most part monks, who laboured sometimes for pleasure and sometimes for penance, in multiplying copies of the classics and the Scriptures.

"Of all bodily labours which are proper for us," says Cassiodorus, the old Calabrian monk, "that of copying books has always been more to my taste than any other. The more so, as in this exercise the mind is instructed by the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and it is a kind of homily to the others, whom these books may reach. It is preaching with the hand, by converting the fingers into tongues; it is publishing to men in silence the words of salvation; in fine, it is fighting against the demon with pen and ink. As many words as a transcriber writes, so many wounds the demon receives. In a word, a recluse, seated in his chair to copy books, travels into different provinces,

without moving from the spot, and the labour of his hands is felt even where he is not."

Nearly every monastery was provided with its Scriptorium. Nicholas de Clairvaux, St. Bernard's secretary, in one of his letters, describes his cell, which he calls Scriptoriolum, where he copied books. And Mabillon, in his *Études Monastiques*, says that in his time were still to be seen at Citeaux "many of those little cells where the transcribers and bookbinders worked."

Silvestre's *Paléographie Universelle* contains a vast number of facsimiles of the most beautiful illuminated manuscripts of all ages and all countries; and Montfaucon in his *Palæographia Græca* gives the names of over three hundred calligraphers. He also gives an account of the books they copied, and the colophons, with which, as with a satisfactory flourish of the pen, they closed their long-continued labours. Many of these are very curious; expressing joy, humility, remorse; entreating the reader's prayers and pardon for the writer's sins; and sometimes pronouncing a malediction on any one who should steal the book. A few of these I subjoin :—

"As pilgrims rejoice, beholding their native land, so are transcribers made glad, beholding the end of a book."

"Sweet is it to write the end of any book."

"Ye who read, pray for me, who have written this book, the humble and sinful Theodulus."

"As many, therefore, as shall read this book, pardon me, I beseech you, if aught I have erred in accent acute and grave, in apostrophe, in breathing soft or aspirate; and may God save you all. Amen."

"If anything is well, praise the transcriber; if ill, pardon his unskilfulness."

"Ye who read, pray for me, the most sinful of all men, for the Lord's sake."

"The hand that has written this book shall decay, alas! and become dust, and go down to the grave, the corrupter of all bodies. But all ye who are of the portion of Christ, pray that I may obtain the pardon of my sins. Again and again I beseech you with tears, brothers and fathers, accept my miserable supplication, O holy choir! I am called John, woe is me! I am called Hiereus, or Sacerdos, in name only, not in unction."

"Whoever shall carry away this book, without permission of the Pope, may he incur the malediction of the Holy Trinity, of the Holy Mother of God, of Saint John the Baptist, of the one hundred and eighteen holy Nicene Fathers, and of all the Saints; the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah; and the halter of Judas; anathema, amen."

"Keep safe, O Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, my three fingers, with which I have written this book."

"Mathusalas Machir transcribed this divinest book in toil, infirmity, and dangers many."

"Bacchius Barbardorius and Michael Sophianus wrote this book in sport and laughter, being the guests of their noble and common friend Vincentius Pinellus, and Petrus Nunnius, a most learned man."

This last colophon, Montfaucon does not suffer to pass without reproof. "Other calligraphers," he remarks, "demand only the prayers of their readers, and the pardon of their sins; but these glory in their wantonness."

Page 359. *Drink down to your peg.*

One of the canons of Archbishop Anselm, promulgated at the beginning of the twelfth century, ordains "that priests go not to drinking bouts, nor drink to pegs." In the times of the hard-drinking Danes, King Edgar ordained that "pins or nails should be fastened into the drinking-cups or horns at stated distances, and whosoever shall drink beyond those marks at one draught should be obnoxious to a severe punishment."

Sharpe, in his *History of the Kings of England*, says: "Our ancestors were formerly famous for compotation: their liquor was ale, and one method of amusing themselves in this way was with the peg-tankard. I had lately one of them in my hand. It had on the inside a row of eight pins, one above another, from top to bottom. It held two quarts, and was a noble piece of plate, so that there was a gill of ale, half a pint, Winchester measure, between each peg. The law was, that every person that drank was to empty the space between pin and pin, so that the pins were so many measures to make the company all drink alike, and to swallow the same quantity of liquor. This was a pretty sure method of making all the company drunk, especially if it be considered that the rule was, that whosoever drank short of his pin, or beyond it, was obliged to drink again, and even as deep as to the next pin."

Page 361. *The Convent of St. Gildas de Rhuys.*

Abelard, in a letter to his friend Philintus, gives a sad picture of this monastery. "I live," he says, "in a barbarous country, the language of which I do not understand; I have no conversation, but with the rudest people. My walks are on the inaccessible shore of a sea, which is perpetually stormy. My monks are only known by their

dissoluteness, and living without any rule or order. Could you see the abbey, Philintus, you would not call it one. The doors and walls are without any ornament, except the heads of wild boars and hinds' feet, which are nailed up against them, and the hides of frightful animals. The cells are hung with the skins of deer. The monks have not so much as a bell to wake them, the cocks and dogs supply that defect. In short, they pass their whole days in hunting: would to Heaven that were their greatest fault, or that their pleasures terminated there! I endeavour in vain to recall them to their duty; they all combine against me, and I only expose myself to continual vexations and dangers. I imagine I see every moment a naked sword hang over my head. Sometimes they surround me, and load me with infinite abuses; sometimes they abandon me, and I am left alone to my own tormenting thoughts. I make it my endeavour to merit by my sufferings, and to appease an angry God. Sometimes I grieve for the loss of the house of the Paraclete, and wish to see it again. Ah, Philintus, does not the love of Heloise still burn in my heart? I have not yet triumphed over that unhappy passion. In the midst of my retirement I sigh, I weep, I pine, I speak the dear name Heloise, and am pleased to hear the sound."—*Letters of the celebrated Abelard and Heloise. Translated by Mr. John Hughes.* Glasgow, 1751.

Page 379. *Were it not for my magic garters and staff.*

The method of making the Magic Garters and the Magic Staff is thus laid down in *Les Secrets Merveilleux du Petit Albert*, a French translation of *Alberti Parvi Lucii Libellus de Mirabilibus Naturæ Arcanis*:—"Gather some of the herb called motherwort, when the sun is entering the first degree of the sign of Capricorn; let it dry a little in the shade, and make some garters of the skin of a young hare; that is to say, having cut the skin of the hare into strips two inches wide, double them, sew the before-mentioned herb between, and wear them on your legs. No horse can keep up with a man on foot who is furnished with these garters."—Page 128.

"Gather, on the morrow of All Saints, a strong branch of willow, of which you will make a staff, furnished to your liking. Hollow it out, by removing the pith from within, after having furnished the lower end with an iron ferrule. Put into the bottom of the staff the two eyes of a young wolf, the tongue and heart of a dog, three green lizards, and the hearts of three swallows. These must all be dried in the sun, between two papers, having been first sprinkled

with finely-pulverised saltpetre. Besides all these, put into the staff seven leaves of vervain, gathered on the eve of St. John the Baptist, with a stone of divers colours, which you will find in the nest of the lapwing, and stop the end of the staff with a pomel of box, or of any other material you please, and be assured that this staff will guarantee you from the perils and mishaps which too often befall travellers, either from robbers, wild beasts, mad dogs, or venomous animals. It will also procure you the goodwill of those with whom you lodge."

END OF VOL. I.

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